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SPORT IN ABYSSINIA.



OUR PARTY.

Frontispice.

SPORT
IN
ABYSSINIA;

OR,

The Mareb and Tackazzee.

BY

THE EARL OF MAYO,

LIEUTENANT, GRENADIER GUARDS.

LONDON:
JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET.

1876.

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P R E F A C E.

I PRESENT this book to the Public simply as an account of what I did and saw ; and the impressions the different events and scenes made upon my mind.

I have written it from notes and my daily Journal. The stories that are in it were told me, some by Natives, others by Europeans ; either over the camp fire, or to while away the tedium of a long march, or the *ennui* of life on board ship.

These tales must be taken as they are written ; they amused me much at the time, and if they only interest my readers I shall be content.

I hope to revisit Abyssinia, but under more favourable auspices ; and trust that better luck may attend me.

I have spelt the names of places as they are *pronounced*, having had them repeated over several times to me by our excellent interpreter, Peter Brou.

Victoria Street, London, 1876.

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SPORT IN ABYSSINIA.

CHAPTER I.

CAIRO—THE KHEDIVE “AT HOME”—THE PYRAMIDS—PETROS, OUR CONDUCTOR—SUEZ—OUR PROVISIONS—THE START FROM SUEZ—ON BOARD THE DESSOOK—SOUAKIM—A USEFUL WEAPON—MASSOWAH—NATIVE FISHERMEN—PEARLS—OUR FIRST ENCAMPMENT—ARTIFICIAL SHADE—“MY BATTERY”—“EN ROUTE”—ON CAMEL-BACK—THE FIRST SHOT—AND MISS—A NEW METHOD OF LOADING—PICK-A-BACK—THE RESULT—ARREKEL BEY—WATER SUPPLY—OUR PARTY DIVIDES—A VULTURE TRAP—BAGGAGE TRAIN—CONVICT LABOUR—A TURKISH DINNER-PARTY—THE CORPS DE BALLET.

“In youth’s wild days, it cannot but be pleasant
This idle roaming, round and round the world.”

GOETHE.

NOT to trouble the reader with an account of the route to India, *viâ* Brindisi, I will commence the narrative of my adventures at Cairo, where most of the party who were going to shoot in Abyssinia were assembled.

We had a very jolly time of it at Cairo, and amused ourselves in the usual way, by riding donkeys through the bazaars and trying to win money from the Greeks, who keep all the gambling-houses. Of course most of the time was employed in making

preparations for the journey to, and for travelling in, Abyssinia.

We all went and paid our respects to the Khedive, being introduced by Her Majesty's Consul, Major-General Staunton. His Highness the Khedive was very civil and courteous, and said he would give us letters to the different Governors of the Egyptian Provinces through which we were likely to pass. He also provided all of us with firmans.

A day or two afterwards we received invitations to a *soirée théâtrale*, given at the Palace of Kasr-el-Nil. This lordly "palace" is simply a large wooden structure on the banks of the Nile, close to the great barracks in which most of the troops of Cairo are quartered.

The entertainment was particularly dull, and the only thing that enlivened us at all was the excessive crush of the company going up the wooden stairs, which made the whole place shake. Just as we were entering the room the floor creaked loudly, and the company parted as if a shell had burst in the midst of them; I thought the whole place was coming down. Luckily, there was no panic, or I do not know what would have happened, as we were at the top of the house, having gone up about six flights of stairs, and the room was full. There was an elaborate supper afterwards, for which I did not stop. I was

only too glad during the first pause to leave so hot an entertainment.

One Sunday afternoon we drove out to the Pyramids, and ate lunch under some trees, sitting on one of those broken Egyptian wheels which are used for raising water. Afterwards we went inside the Pyramids ; it was very warm work, and we were forced to buy quantities of antiquities, which, I believe, are manufactured in Birmingham.

I found I had to take off my boots in scrambling down a labyrinth of narrow passages inside of the Pyramid to get to the King's Chamber, for I had twice been thrown on my back through having nails in my boots.

After having spent ten days at Cairo, I resolved to start for Suez in order to make arrangements, and to gain information about Abyssinia. By great luck I met an Abyssinian merchant, quite a young fellow, in the bazaar at Suez, who said he would go to Abyssinia as my servant, and he turned out to be very useful, as he could speak Amharic, Arabic, and Hindustanee, as well as English. Petros, such was his name, followed me through Abyssinia, and nursed me with great care when I fell very ill on my return to the coast.

I arrived at Suez just before H., who was to go to Abyssinia with me ; he had come from South-

ampton by the P. and O. steamer, and I was delighted to have arranged so nicely with him as to suit our mutual convenience.

I learnt that my provisions had all arrived safely by the P. and O., but not my heavy guns nor ammunition. What had become of them I could not make out, as Rigby, of St. James's Street, had most distinct orders in writing to send them to Suez. It turned out afterwards that the P. and O. Company, through carelessness, had sent the guns on to Pointe de Galle; they arrived in Abyssinia the day before we started for the Tackazzee, where the big game is to be found. H. and I were hard at work for two days shifting the provisions from the big boxes in which they had come out into smaller ones, in order that these might be carried on camels and mules. I bought a few necessary articles at the P. and O. stores, such as a large frying-pan, a common kettle, etc., for rough camping work; most of the other things I had purchased in London, and I would recommend all other travellers to do the same. I bought all my provisions from the Army and Navy Co-operative Stores, Victoria Street; and I take this opportunity of stating that, not only were they so well packed that nothing was broken, but also that during the very great heat and exceedingly dry cold winds in Abyssinia not one thing failed, and every article of the

provisions came out as fresh as if I had sent for and got it that day from the stores. The boxes in which the stores were packed I had made from an army pattern; it is the one used in the infantry to carry the carpenters' tools.

A day or two after I had reached Suez, the rest of the party arrived from Sheppard's Hotel, Cairo. The ship we had to go in to Massowah, the seaport town of Abyssinia, was called the *Dessook*—a ship that had been running from Alexandria to Constantinople. She possessed plenty of accommodation, which is rather unusual for this line of steamers. These vessels run every three weeks from Suez, taking and bringing the Egyptian mails from and to Suez, Souakim, and Massowah. It is an enterprise of the Khedive's, and is called the Posta Khedive Company; scarcely, I should think, paying well, as the trade from all ports of the Red Sea is very small. They also carry pilgrims during the pilgrim season.

We were a party of eleven on board the *Dessook*. These vessels make no arrangements for providing passengers with food; so we formed a "mess" of our own, with a president and a committee. Of course, we had a great many cooks, as the party was large and we were going to separate; seven to disembark at Souakim, and the remaining four at Massowah. Nothing could have been merrier than our little mess.

The only other passengers besides ourselves were some French Roman Catholic priests with a French bishop, and a Frenchman belonging to a house of business in Massowah. The bishop was very pleasant and intelligent, and gave the rest of the party and myself a great deal of useful information as to living and travelling in Abyssinia : he was Bishop of Keren, in the Bogos country.

In about three days from Suez we arrived at Souakim, which is built upon an island. The houses are white square structures, with a minaret dotted about here and there. I went on shore with H. in the evening, and we walked about that part of the town which is on the mainland. The inhabitants of Souakim are Arabs ; the men are very handsome, well-made, likely fellows, and they walk about hand-in-hand, twirling little crooked sticks and dressed in white turbans and white clothes.

I bought one of those crooked knives peculiar to Souakim with which the young gentlemen of the place settle their little disputes. They hold the knife dagger fashion, and hack away at each other till one of the combatants faints from loss of blood. One could see, from the shape of the knife, that it would be very hard to inflict a mortal wound with such a weapon.

Here seven of the party landed, including Captain

B., Mr. Marcopoli, and Mr. Russell. They were going up to the White Nile, by Berber, to join Colonel Gordon, of the White Nile exploration. The other four were going to Kassala, across the Desert, and thence down to the Hamaram village mentioned by Sir Samuel Baker in his 'Nile Tributaries of Abyssinia,' to shoot all kinds of big game. The ship only remained two days at Souakim, and then sailed for Massowah. The rest of the journey was a little dull, as the separation broke up this very cheery party, and only four of us were now remaining.

On the morning of the 29th December, 1874, H., Lord R., A., and myself landed at Massowah, and here I begin my journal with an account of our sport and adventures.

Dec. 29, 1874.—The first thing we did was to pay our respects to the Governor. I presented the letter which had been procured for me from the Minister of Foreign Affairs in Egypt, and, of course, we had the usual accompaniment of coffee. Arrekel Bey, the Governor, was exceedingly civil, and said he would do everything in his power to get us mules, etc., for our journey to the interior.

Massowah is built on an island, in the same way as Souakim; but there are two long causeways joining it with the mainland, whereas at Souakim one goes from the mainland to the town in boats—coarse-shaped

things, which are also used at Massowah, and which I was told are not made in the country, but are brought to Jidda by large steamers from India.

The boats, or rather rafts, that the people go out fishing in in the harbour of Massowah are very primitive, being made of a few logs of wood turned up at the ends. The paddler is always wet with the sea, but as he wears no clothes, except a rag about his loins, it does not matter so much, the sun soon dries him. These fishermen are more like fishes than human beings, as they are in and out of the water every minute.

All the export trade of Abyssinia comes to Massowah, and the goods are mostly shipped by the Hindoo Banians, who have had a monopoly of the trade of this place for many years. The merchandise is sent to Bombay, by Aden, in native boats called sambouks. There is a pearl fishery off the island of Dhalac, thirty-five miles from the coast of Massowah, and the Banians make a good thing of it, paying for pearls in clothes and those necessities the natives of the island are likely to want, and selling their purchases for rupees at Bombay.

Dec. 30.—The first day in camp was certainly uncomfortable in all respects, as was to have been expected, but we soon got straight, and then had time to look about us. The hills of Abyssinia in the

distance, lying due west of our little camp, looked so lovely as the sun set over them, one range rising over the other, that I was eager to be off to see a country that so little is known about, and whose people are the only black race of Christians existing.

We pitched our little camp outside the town on a small peninsula, close to where the Egyptian Government is building a large house for the Governor.

There is no shade whatever near Massowah, and the Governor very kindly got the Egyptian soldiers who were told off to us as our guard, as well as his servants, to put up a large mat "*shemmianah*,"* which gave us a very pleasant shade during the heat of the day. We always took our meals under its shelter while we stayed at Massowah.

As I said before, my heavy guns had not arrived at Suez, so my battery was as follows :—

One 16-bore central-fire gun, by Purdey, carrying ball.

A muzzle-loading rifle, by Purdey, carrying $2\frac{1}{4}$ drachms of powder.

A 12-bore pin-fire shot gun, which I bought at Suez from Captain Kellock of the P. and O., made by Crane, of the Royal Exchange. This turned out to be a most serviceable gun and a very hard hitter.

* An Indian word for a large square tent.

These guns were rather weak to shoot the large game with, but H. had brought his Rigby's "Express" with him, which, he said, I could use whenever I wanted to do so.

Dec. 31.—We had all four settled the evening before to go out shooting, and accordingly, this morning, we started early for the lowest range of hills to be seen in the distance. We expected to find some small game, such as gazelles and small deer. I rode a camel, and H. a donkey. Traversing the narrow causeway which joined the little peninsula on which our camp was situate to the mainland, the first thing that struck me was the beautiful colours of the fish in the sea-water at each side of the causeway. A. got off his camel and tried to shoot one, but the water was rather deep.

On reaching the mainland we found ourselves in a large open plain covered with stunted bushes, and in the distance could be seen the village of Moncullu, where the residents of Massowah go during the heat of summer, which is very great in this climate.

H. and I made for the hills as quickly as we could; my camel striding ahead took the lead, and he followed on his donkey. The motion of the camel is very pleasant; as I had bought a capital camel-saddle in the bazaar at Cairo, so far from the motion being inconvenient, as some travellers allege it to be,

I found it very comfortable ; it almost made me fall asleep.

We saw no game on the plain we were crossing. When we had got over the first range of small hills, the guide, a Shoho Arab, stopped in the sandy bed of a small river where some Arabs were watering their flocks of goats. The water is got at by grubbing a hole in the sandy bed of the river, and then the Arabs scoop it up with a goatskin into a wooden trough, or, failing that, into another hole made in the sand.

Here we stopped for a short time, watered our beasts, and asked the natives if they had seen any game. They said there was something in some bushes close by, whereupon we were both on the tiptoe of expectation. I got my rifle ready, and H. his shotgun. We went towards the spot indicated, and, almost among the herd of goats, I saw running about a small brown-looking beast, like a very small deer. We tried to stalk him, but he bolted past. H. fired at him and missed ; I then fired my rifle and missed also. We then kicked him out of another bush, but H. did not see him, he having broken cover on the wrong side.

This animal turned out to be a little mouse-deer, or dik-dik. In loading my rifle again, I rammed down the bullet without putting in any powder, not being accustomed to use muzzle-loading weapons.

This put one barrel *hors de combat*; thus the reader will see that my first attempt at African sport was not a success.

One of the natives then volunteered to show us some bigger deer. We went on through a sandy, rocky valley in which mimosa-bushes were dotted about. H. agreed to go to the ground to the right and I to the left, so as to work it over thoroughly. The boy who was with me said he saw some deer on the ridge of the high hill at the foot of which I was; I went up the hill, and sent him round the other way. On coming to the top I saw the deer feeding and wagging their tails just below me, but they were too far off for the rifle I had. I longed for my Express, which, at that time, was on its way to Pointe de Galle in Ceylon, instead of being with me! The deer caught sight of me and trotted away. I sent back the boy for H., as he had his Express with him; when he joined me we tried to get at them again, but failed. We saw another dik-dik, and then started for home, in a temperature that was very hot indeed.

We were back in camp late in the afternoon, and, having had something to eat, I determined to take my rifle on board the *Dessook*, to ask the engineer, who was an Englishman, to extract the bullet. Arrekel Bey, the Governor, sent a boat round to our camp, and the men rowed us out to the ship, singing, as

they were rowing, a wild Arab song which sounded very prettily. It was a lovely moon-lit night, and every dip of their oars in the water threw up waves of phosphorescent light ; which phenomenon everybody who has been in these latitudes must have seen and admired.

The engineer put my gun right in about half an hour ; he had to unscrew the block at the breech of the gun. The Arabs rowed us home ; they had to carry us on their backs for a portion of the distance, as our boat could not get near enough to the shore. The native who was carrying H. managed to drop him, and he got a ducking ; I very nearly tumbled off my Arab sailor, on whom I was riding pick-a-back, from laughter, and I was very glad to get to bed after a rather long day.

Jan. 1, 1875.—This day we all four paid a visit to Arrekel Bey, who said he had seven mules to carry our things, and camels for A. and Lord R., who were not going to the hills, but to the province of Bogos, which formerly belonged to the Abyssinians, and was taken from them by the Egyptians.

A., who had been in this part of the world before, expected to find plenty of big game, as it was a new country, and no English sportsman had shot over it previously. I tried to buy a horse in Mas-sowah ; Arrekel Bey's groom put him through his

paces, showing him off up and down the space in front of the Governor's house. It was very amusing to see this Ethiopian sitting on the horse, with his toes well stuck out, and displaying the points of the animal, much in the same way as any London dealer would in his straw-yard.

Arrekel Bey very kindly invited us to dinner for the next day at Moncullu ; he has a sort of little summer retreat there. He said he was going to take us to see the wells which supply Massowah with water. The water is brought in earthenware pipes built up inside the wall of the causeway, along which we had gone the day before, and the water is pumped up from wells in the rock by convicts transported hither from Egypt. Massowah, before the conduit was completed, was very badly supplied with water ; in fact, there was nothing but rain-water tanks, and the inhabitants, even now, are charged for the water so much per skin. We were to take all our luggage and baggage to Moncullu, and then this party of four was to separate ; A. and Lord R. going to Bogos, and H. and myself to Adowa, the capital of Abyssinia, whence we intended to go down to Tackazzee for the shooting. The reader will see, later on, that we had to change our plans.

Jan. 2.—This morning I prepared some fishing-tackle, intending in the afternoon to try and catch

some of the strange-coloured fish that I had seen in the water the previous day. Fish of most beautiful colours and extraordinary shapes and sizes abound in all parts of the Red Sea.

A. had brought out some of the iron traps that are used by keepers for catching rabbits in England. I set one of these on the top of a heap of stones near the camp, with a bit of meat tied on the plate of it, to try and catch one of those great vultures which are always seen hovering about Eastern towns. In about half an hour one came swooping down on it, made a "grab" at the meat and was caught by the legs. He would have flown away with the trap as well, but for Fisk, H.'s English servant, who caught and secured him. He was one of the common bare-necked vultures that live on carrion.

In the afternoon I went out fishing, but did not find much sport; I only caught a pipe-fish, which we ate. That evening some of our mules and three camels, as also a string of camels for A. and Lord R., appeared. Arrekel Bey, the Governor, sent to ask if we were ready; I said we were all ready, but that our promised transport animals had not all come. In about half an hour the Governor arrived himself, when I told him that I could not start without a proper supply of mules. He stated they could not be got that day, but he would do his best the next day; I very politely

said I would not move without my luggage. He then ordered all the donkeys that are used to carry the water into Massowah from the conduit just outside the town to be brought. They were a mixed lot; some were blind and some were lame, but our luggage was carried into Moncullu some way or other. The great thing was that we made a move in the right direction.

It was quite a sight to see this troop of animals, consisting of camels, donkeys, and mules—the servants pushing along the narrow causeway—one donkey lagging behind, and another trying to push by—kettles tumbling off and straps coming undone. *C'est le premier pas qui coûte*. I am certain that it cost the poor donkeys a great deal of pain, as they were frequently belaboured with sticks and were loudly cursed in Massowah Arabic.

Arrekel Bey took us to see the wells made in the rock in Moncullu, where the most deliciously cool water is pumped up. The convicts looked fine, strong, muscular fellows, but gentlemen that one would not like to meet alone on a dark night. They had just left off work, it being sunset, six o'clock.

We then adjourned to dinner, which was laid out in a large oblong hut made of grass. This is the way that houses are made in Moncullu, as a free current of air passes through the whole structure, and any other material would be too hot.

We had a regular Turkish dinner, and not at all a bad one either. We first began by drinking, as is the Turkish fashion, some excellent liqueur which is called in these parts "araké." I believe it is made in Smyrna, but it is very good. As some of my readers may know, a Turkish dinner consists of a great number of dishes, which are handed about to the guests in quick succession. I managed to get through most of them, and I think I could have succeeded in doing more, but for the circumstance that the champagne had not been iced; in fact, ice in those parts is an unknown luxury. It is only in India that Europeans can really *live* in a hot country.

After dinner we were taken to a large marquee. The ground outside was surrounded by a circle of torches held in braziers, somewhat like a beacon, burning wood which was replenished by the Egyptian soldiers, a large number of whom had been "told off" for this purpose.

There were divans in the marquee, on which we reclined. We had waited about a quarter of an hour, when some musicians appeared with tom-toms and rude guitars, on which they began strumming, and making a hideous noise. Then some dancing girls were brought in, and their extraordinary performance surpassed anything I had ever seen either in India or at Covent Garden.

The natives of Moncullu were ranged round the open part of the marquee, singing to the music and keeping time by clapping their hands. All the dancing girls did was to sway their bodies about in an affected manner, stamp with their feet on the ground, and wag their heads backward and forward, making their long plaited hair swing across their faces. They were highly scented with musk, etc., *à la mode Arabe*. Like all Arab women, they were very small but beautifully made, with tiny hands and feet.

This entertainment lasted about three hours, and, between the heat of the hut and the smell of the negroes, I very nearly went to sleep. At last the performance came to a close, and we retired to our respective tents. The soldiers put out the lights, but I could see Arrekel Bey's native servants, after we were gone, regaling themselves on the remains of the liqueur and brandy left upon the table in the marquee. My head, the next morning, was not quite so clear as it might have been. It must have been the Turkish sweetmeats that caused it, I think !

Jan. 3.—To-day we were all up at sunrise. Our mules were loaded, and also our three camels. Two more mules had arrived the evening before. H. bought one, of a grey colour, for his English servant to ride, and I was to ride a small brown mule. She turned out a capital animal and very sure-footed

over the rocks in the hills. We ate some breakfast and started for Sahatee at eight o'clock, having said good-bye to A. and Lord R.* I little thought on that bright morning when we shook hands and wished each other luck, that I should never see his cheery face again. His death was indeed a sad, sad ending to an expedition which began so pleasantly and well!

* Earl of Ranfurly, Captain Grenadier Guards, who died at Souakim, on the Red Sea, May 10, 1875, on board the steamer which was that day leaving for Suez.

CHAPTER II.

OUR EQUIPMENT—TENTS AND BEDS—COMMISSARIAT—THE KITCHEN
—MULES, THEIR HABITS AND TREATMENT—CAMELS—UP COUNTRY
—MY FIRST BAG—SILVER CUPS—A WILD BOAR—AILET—OUR ES-
CORT—THE FIRST OF THE JUNGLE—SWEDISH MISSIONARIES—AN
ABYSSINIAN “SPA”—A HOT BATH—THE “RAINS”—THRASHING
THE TENTS.

BEFORE taking the reader any farther into Abyssinia I must say something about our equipment; what tents we had, and what description of provisions.

We took with us two tents; a three-poled tent made by Edgington, and called by him the Punjáb Hill tent. I should advise everybody to take this description of tent for rough work in any country. Head room is what is wanted for comfort; and this is the only strong, portable, and shapely tent that combines those advantages. Mr. Galton, in his most useful little book, the ‘Art of Travel,’ says very nearly the same thing. We had a little Union Jack to fly at the top of it, and *iron* tent pegs. Of course these tents can be made of any reasonable size. The other—a *tente d’abri*—was for Fisk, H.’s English

servant, and was for him to sit in while he skinned the birds we shot, of which we intended to make a good collection, as they are very beautiful in these parts.

Ours was rather smaller than usual ; our two beds were on each side of a person entering the door, which left a space at the head of the beds for a box for brushes and dressing-things, etc.

We slept on iron camp-beds, and I was provided with a blanket lined with silk, which is a device I should recommend to everybody else, only advising them to take care that the blanket is long and wide enough to fall over the side as well as to hang over the foot of the bed. The sleeper lies in the fold of this blanket, so that if the sides were tacked together it would make a complete bag ; this is good both for hot and cold climates. The lining should be of red or blue silk, which is easily cleaned with a sponge or piece of rag, and some warm water. White, of Aldershot, made mine for the Cannock Chase autumn manœuvres. It is almost waterproof, and can be slept in with as much comfort as in the best sheets.

Our provisions were calculated to last three Europeans for four months. I had the list overlooked by the head purser of the P. and O. Company in London, who gave me some very useful hints with

regard to preserving provisions. I cut down the amount of stores as much as possible in order to save transport, as, from what little experience I had had of India and coolie work in that country, I knew that the lighter one travels, the more comfortable one is, and the farther one goes. The following is an exact list of the provisions :—

1½ doz. tins of cabin biscuits (Peek and Frean).

1½ „ „ of German rusks.

6 „ small tins of cocoa and milk, from Lion brand.

½ doz. small bottles of currie-powder.

1½ „ pots of marmalade.

½ „ tins of plum-pudding.

One middle piece of bacon, cut up, and hermetically sealed in tins.

1 doz. tins of ox-tail soup.

½ „ „ of *pâté de foie gras*.

3 „ „ of Cambridge sausages.

1½ „ „ of sardines.

Two tin-opening knives.

14 lbs. of yellow soap, called “primrose soap.”

8½ pint bottles of Worcester sauce.

6½ „ „ of Harvey’s sauce.

28 lbs. of preserved potatoes.

3 bottles of best French vinegar.

12 lbs. of tea, done up in 1 lb. tins.

1 doz. bottles of mixed pickles.

18 2-oz. pots of Liebig's extract of meat.

The cocoa and milk in tins was one of the most useful of the provisions we had, as it only required the addition of hot water to make a most delicious cup of cocoa. This was very useful when starting early in the morning and things were wanted in a hurry, and it was quite a meal by itself. German rusks I would also recommend, as they are very good eating, and do not dry up the mouth so much as biscuits. Of course these provisions were helped out a great deal by fresh meat, milk, eggs, bread, etc., which we found in the country. Besides all this, we took a large sack of onions, about two donkey-loads of rice, some potatoes, some salt for table use in bottles, and some black pepper and mustard. Coffee of the very best sort can be got at Massowah. We took a little sugar with us, but it was not properly packed, and all melted together in one compact mass. The best way to take sugar would be to have pounded loaf-sugar done up in pickle bottles or tins.

With regard to the cooking, H. had a large tin box which contained a canteen made by Thornhill, of Bond Street; into this all the boiling cans and a small kettle fitted, the one into the other. I would

not recommend this arrangement for *rough work*, as if a can gets bent it does not fit into the other, which is a disadvantage, as it then has to be carried separately, and eventually ends by being knocked to pieces. The best kinds of things for the cook are a common gridiron, a large frying-pan, three sizes of pots made of *strong* tin in the shape of milk-pails for boiling in ; a good tin kettle, a soup-ladle, and a couple of butcher's knives. With those one may go anywhere.

With regard to knives and forks, the best sorts are those that are made by Thornhill, of Bond Street, for skinning animals, but they answer other purposes as well. All steel things, in a hot, dry climate, can be very well cleaned and polished by the natives with the wood ashes out of the camp-fire, and there is no reason why they should look dirty, for dirty things always take away the appetite, especially if you have sometimes to eat rather strange food. The forks I had made from my own pattern, and two of them can be converted into a fish spear on an emergency. It is a great thing to try and manage to have such implements as may be made to serve more than one purpose ; as the reader will understand, this saves a great deal of carriage.

H. brought out two English hunting-saddles ; they did very well for the mules we rode in Abyssinia.

He also brought snaffle-bridles ; these were a great deal better than the bridles of the country, which are dreadfully severe and pull any animal back on his haunches with the least touch. This is rather dangerous on a narrow path over a precipice, as sometimes, going uphill, by mistake a rider is apt to hang on by the bridle instead of catching hold of either the mane or the pommel. The mules took to the snaffle very kindly ; in fact, it seemed quite a relief to them to have this description of bit in their mouths.

As so much has been written upon mules lately, with regard to their use as draught animals for farm purposes and in other ways, I copy from my notes made on my way home some memoranda of the way these animals are treated and looked after in Abyssinia.

Everybody in Abyssinia rides a mule ; even the king rides a mule, and has his charger led in front of him. This custom is followed by all the nobles and "swells" in the country.

The saddles used on Abyssinian mules are made with high cantels and pommels, and are well padded ; a good sheep-skin Numbdah, or one made of old cotton cloth, folded into many folds—the older and the more ragged the better, as it is then softer—is put under the saddle. On the march, when the halting-place for the day is arrived at, they take off the

saddle but not the numbdah, tying up the mule in the shade for about half-an-hour to let the animal get cool. They then remove the numbdah and lead the mule to roll. The best place for this purpose is in the ashes of an old camp-fire. In fact, in Abyssinia there are regular rolling-places for the mules and donkeys at most of the camping grounds ; the animals seem to know them by instinct, especially the patient ass, which latter is used merely for carrying baggage. Anybody riding an ass in Abyssinia would be hooted through the country. This is rather extraordinary, as these animals, among the Arabs, and also in Egypt, are considered quite the thing, and large donkeys of good breed fetch very high prices in Cairo. I myself saw one at Suez that had cost at Cairo 40*l.*, but he was made like a race-horse.

After the mule has rolled they take him to water ; they next hobble him, and let him go out to graze. The best sort of hobble I have ever seen, and one used in Abyssinia, is one by which the near fore leg is tied up with a leather thong, about three-quarters of an inch wide, to the off hind leg, or *vice versâ*. The thong must be so tied that the mule can walk pretty easily, and yet it should not be too loose.

These remarks apply to donkeys as well as to mules ; but, of course, the former animals do not require so much care as mules. They need not be

hobbled when let out to graze, but should always have a man to look after them in case of attacks by wild beasts.

In travelling with these beasts the great thing, of course, is to avoid sore backs in this country, where the temperature varies so much in different parts; as, for instance, I was out duck-shooting one morning at 5.30 in a white frost, and at the next camping ground, at a less altitude, at the same hour of the morning, I could not bear a thick coat on at all when walking out shooting.

This change of temperature occurring very often, day by day, while travelling with these animals through Abyssinia, must have, I think, some effect on the backs of mules and donkeys. The origin of the swelling under the skin, I am persuaded, must depend on the sudden check to the perspiration. Of course, if the saddle or packing had at all bruised the back of the animal, this would accelerate the complaint.

The back having become sore or swollen up, matter is formed underneath.* To cure this the natives of Abyssinia cast the donkey or mule, and with a hot

* It is not a necessary coincidence that if the back becomes sore the swelling should come on, as I have seen several cases where there were no outward signs of soreness, but still where large swellings were forming.

iron score the back. In two days the wound begins to discharge matter; after a few days more, the sore should be washed once or twice every twenty-four hours and dressed with *fresh butter*. The back becomes much harder after these wounds have healed up, but it requires at least a month or more to do so, and the animal should be kept within doors or in any enclosed space, and fed on corn and green food, as the discharge from the wound is exceedingly weakening.

Some merchants of Abyssinia, who travel daily for months down to the coast from distant parts, much prefer mules and donkeys whose backs have been burnt, as, they say, the animals are hardier, and the soreness and swelling are not likely to recur.

As to our camels, they were with us only a short time, for they left us at the foot of the hills; my experience of camels, therefore, is not very great. All that I observed was, that it is best to leave them to the cameleers; but to see that the cameleers, when loading up at starting, are not trying to shirk their loads and put the things told off to *them* on their neighbours' camels. This is a favourite expedient, and they will tell any lies and swear any oaths to get rid of a pound or two of baggage, especially if the camel is a favourite one with them.

With regard to the mode of packing mules and

donkeys, it would take up too much space to give an account here. All I would recommend to the traveller is to follow the custom of the country in which he finds himself. He should not interfere with the natives in loading, as, most likely, he will thereby only display his ignorance, and they will get annoyed and sulky at being interfered with. Sir Samuel Baker, in his 'Nile Tributaries in Abyssinia,' gives an interesting account of the mode in which he loaded his donkeys for starting to Central Africa.

Now, to continue our journey. The plain on which we had been encamped soon ended, and then we began to ascend the hills. The ground was very rocky and arid, only stunted bushes growing here and there. We then came upon a small valley which reached to the bank of a sandy river-bed, with rather thick jungle on each side. One of the servants said we should be likely to find some game here. I got off my mule and walked up the bed of the river, telling the man with my mule to go straight on with the rest of the party, and that I would rejoin them after making a slight *détour*. After I had gone a little way a *dik-dik* crossed the dry river-bed in front of me; I fired at him, but it was too long a shot. I then tried to circumvent some guinea-fowl, with which the jungle fringing the banks of the watercourse abounded; they made the whole place alive with

their calling to each other. They are exactly like the guinea-fowl one sees at home, and make precisely the same noise. They did not let me approach them within shooting range, being very shy. I successfully stalked a hare and knocked him over, he was of that description of animals which our American cousins call the jackass rabbit; I leave it to naturalists to give his Latin name. We ate him for dinner, and he was capital food.

I then trotted on in front of H., and arrived at Sahatee, the place we were to camp at for the night, about one o'clock in the afternoon. My first thought was to get something to drink, as I was very thirsty; therefore, obtaining some oranges from a native, of these I sucked some, and squeezed the juice of others into my little silver bowl; they were very bitter, but greatly refreshing.

Before I go on, let me recommend travellers to take these small silver bowls with them; it is wonderful how useful they will be found. The bowl can be applied to many purposes, and is easily cleaned with fine wood ashes. One makes one's tea in it, covering it over with a plate to make it draw; one drinks one's soup out of it, or coffee or cocoa, as the case may be; and one mixes one's medicine in it. Silver is a very good metal for things to be made of, as if it is bent it is easily

brought into shape again. One of the gun-bearers should always carry the bowl, so that the traveller may have it at hand to dip into the stream and drink from ; the brightness of the silver shows whether the water is fit to drink. In Abyssinia the natives do not understand silver vessels, and set no value on them, thinking they are tin ; but in other countries they might easily be stolen.

The camping-place of Sahatee is surrounded by rocks. There are two trees on a little knoll in the centre, and it was under one of these I was lying when H. appeared with the camels, the tents and baggage. We pitched the little tent in the bed of the dried-up river, whence, during the rains, the water dashes over the rocks and flows away to the sea. After we had had something to eat, H. said he was going out shooting, one of the Arabs in charge of the camels telling him that wild pigs abounded here. He had not long gone out of camp before I heard the crack of his rifle. He had wounded a boar in the hind quarter, as it was coming to drink ; but the boar trotted away, leaving blood tracks, which H. and the Arab tried to follow up, but soon lost them in the dust and the hard-baked ground of the jungle. When I heard the shots I started off also to try and find a boar, but was not so lucky. I got back about an hour before dusk, and saw several of the

Francolin partridges pecking about the camping ground ; I killed one and wounded another. H. had just come in, and as the wounded bird rocketed over his head he knocked it down. H. also shot a small brown duck. I had tried to get some of the little sand-grouse as they came down to drink ; but these little birds only come down just as it is getting dusk, and settle quickly on the ground, uttering their peculiar plaintive cry. It was almost impossible to discern them in the fading light, and as I wanted to get a pot shot into the "brown" of them as they were on the ground, for the cook to prepare for our breakfast next morning, I waited too long, the light failed, and I had to give up my intention.

We were camped on the shingle of the river, which, although it is always a very dry, clean spot, and free from insects, has this disadvantage, that the iron legs of the camp-beds sink rather far into the ground ; and sometimes one wakes up finding oneself in a slanting position, with the head lower than the legs.

Jan. 4.—This morning we were on the move early, having left at 6.45 for Ailet. It was a lovely, cloudy day, which is a thing that one knows how to appreciate in an Eastern climate. The country became much greener as we approached Ailet ; this village lies in a valley which is exceedingly fertile—that is to say,

as far as it is cultivated by the Shoho Arabs who dwell in the village. Elephants are found here after the rains, but the place is rather unhealthy at that time, and most of the natives, who are miserable creatures, suffer from fever.

I should state that the Governor had provided us with a guard of six irregular Egyptian soldiers and a non-commissioned officer. In the middle of the night at Sahatee, we had heard the loud report of the Egyptian corporal's carbine. We thought we were going to be attacked; but it turned out, next morning, that he had fired at a pig, in hopes of securing some fresh meat.

These poor soldiers' pay is four dollars a month; they find themselves in clothes and food, but are provided with arms, and all military service is compulsory with the Egyptians.

Our camelceers and Naib Abdul Kerim—the man whom Arrekel Bey, the Governor, had given us to guide us through the country and manage our transport as far as Adowa, the capital of Abyssinia—wanted us to camp near a large tree just outside the house of the Sheik of the village of Ailet. H. and I, however, agreed to go on, so as to get to the hot springs of Ailet, as it was early in the day and we should be a little farther on our journey; we should also be farther away from the village and more likely

to get shooting. After some little palaver and remonstrances from the cameleers, who thought they had come to the end of their day's march, we moved on.

The scene now changed from an open valley into a thorny jungle, and the road was frequently crossed by dried-up river-courses. H., who had already acquired a fine collection of birds in Ceylon and Australia, was very anxious to secure specimens here. This jungle was alive with all varieties of parti-coloured warblers, and he shot several specimens, including a sort of jay with a hooked bill, which utters a strange cry—one that everybody travelling in Abyssinia will soon get accustomed to. It is not unlike the noise of the English jay.

We shortly afterwards came to a little stream which flows from the hot spring ; and we saw a white house in the distance perched on the top of a high hill, for which we made. The little stream narrowed as we advanced, and we found ourselves in a rocky pass. Our Arabs told us that the camels could go no farther. The white house, as we learnt, belonged to some Swedish missionaries. We pitched our camp just at the foot of the hill which rose straight above us, the little white house looking very picturesque at its top ; the hot spring was about ten minutes' walk from our camp. One of the missionaries came down to speak

to us ; he said that they had only just finished building their house, and he hospitably invited us to stay there, but we declined, with thanks.

H. said he would go out shooting, but I stopped in camp to settle things, and before dinner I went up and bathed in the hot spring. My readers must know that this is the fashionable Spa of Abyssinia, whither invalids afflicted with scrofulous and other complaints come to bathe. It is held in great repute all through the country, and I believe with good reason.

The spring was almost too hot to sit in, but I had taken up my big sponge, and douched myself well ; the bath was very soothing after the heat and march of the day.

This evening it began to rain ; this will give the date of the beginning of the rains in the hills lying between the sea and Asmarra, the first table-land in Abyssinia that one comes to on this road. These rains must not be confused with the rains that pour down in Abyssinia, supplying the Nile tributaries that Sir Samuel Baker has explored, and which begin in the month of May.

Directly the rain began the servants and myself busied ourselves in making a little trench around the tent ; this is a precaution everybody ought to take where there is the least chance of rain. I also got my

*courbatch** and thrashed the tent well all round. The reader will, doubtless, wonder why I did this, but it is an old soldier's dodge, and the reason for it is that it makes the threads of the canvas—which, in hot countries, become shrunken and open—to close together, so that, after the application of the *courbatch*, the tent, instead of getting leaky with the rain, becomes more waterproof than before ; a large pliable bundle of twigs will do just as well. H. came in, having shot a small bird or two for his collection, and having seen some pig down the watercourse.

* The *courbatch* is a whip made of hippopotamus hide, and used in Egypt and in the provinces belonging to that country. It is with this whip that malefactors and offenders against the law are chastised. Every stroke of it, if well laid on, will cut into the flesh.

CHAPTER III.

GENERAL KIRKHAM—DIK-DIK—AN ABYSSINIAN HOUSE—A SUCCESSFUL DODGE—EGYPTIAN OUTPOSTS—A PET SHEEP—SPORTSMAN'S PARADISE—LOST IN A MIST—A "NASTY CROPPER"—SAFE IN CAMP—DIGGING FOR PIGS—A LUCKY SHOT—A SHOWER BATH.

I HAD heard at Massowah that General Kirkham, commander in-chief of the King of Abyssinia's army, was at Gindar, about half-a-day's march from Ailet. I had written to the General from Massowah, and, this evening, a servant of the missionaries brought me a note from him, saying that he would come and see us next morning. I was very much interested in seeing General Kirkham, who had lived so long in Abyssinia away from his own country.*

* General Kirkham was formerly a steward in the P. and O. service. He left the P. and O. ship in China, to join the British contingent which Colonel Gordon at that time was raising for the war in China. General Kirkham was terribly wounded both in the head and shoulder in this war; he came home, and Sir William Fergusson, the surgeon, cured him. He afterwards went to Annesley Bay, and, at the time of the Abyssinian expedition, he was employed by Lord Napier of Magdala to buy bullocks for commissariat purposes; when the expedition was over he received leave from Lord Napier to go into Abyssinia. He

Jan. 5.—We got up rather late the next morning, and H. went out shooting. I said I would stay in camp and receive Kirkham when he came, but he did not arrive after all till the afternoon; so, having waited for him until twelve, I decided to go out shooting. I proceeded down to the watercourse, and had not gone far before I came to a pool, at which some pigs were about to drink; I tried to stalk them, but they trotted away. I then turned sharp to the left into the jungle, and wandered about some little time. One could not well imagine a more likely place for wild game, and I expected every moment to see some strange animal dart out of the bushes.

The air was very hot. I had walked about an hour and a half, and I determined to rest and eat some sardines and a crust of bread which I had brought with me. I got on the top of a little mound, and was discussing my luncheon, when I heard a sort of

tendered his services to the king, and was made a colonel of the Abyssinian army. Having drilled some Abyssinian soldiers in the English fashion for the king, in the battle which the king fought against the rebel Goubasse he gained a well-won reputation, for it was owing entirely to those men that Johannes the king won this battle. After this he was made commander-in-chief, which he is now. It may be remembered by some of my readers that General Kirkham came home to England on a mission from King Johannes, to claim protection for Abyssinia from the English Government. This mission failed, and he returned to Abyssinia.

sneezing noise behind me. This made me prick up my ears ; I looked round and saw walking quietly out a beautiful little male dik-dik. I rolled him over with my shot gun, pulled out my knife and rushed after him. He was struggling and bounding about on the ground when I got up to him, when I made several vigorous stabs at him with my knife, but, to my great chagrin, he scampered away. I ran after him, getting well torn by the bushes, and found him lying dead just at the foot of a thorny bush. This was the first African animal I shot, and, although he was so small, I felt as proud of him as a cat would with her first mouse.

At the time the dik-dik came out I heard pigs grunting in a little dell below me, but I could not see them at all. I went back to camp, and hearing that Kirkham was up in the missionaries' house I sent word to him that I had come in. I was sitting in the tent when suddenly I saw a fair, rather good-looking, slim man walking up to me ; he was dressed in a frock-coat and forage cap—a sort of undress general's uniform. It had a very strange effect to see this man walk up to one in an African jungle—his dress, too, not such as one would expect to see in those parts.

We soon became the best of friends. He told me he would do everything in his power to get us shooting,

and forward us through the country. We had a very pleasant little dinner in the tent, talking over our prospects; Kirkham said he would breakfast with us next morning, and then go on to Gindar. At this place he has built a sort of wooden shanty; he had also brought his tent with him to make arrangements for us. He was attended by an Abyssinian servant, named Peter Brou, a man who had been educated at Malta; this man spoke English very well, and could also speak Amharic, all the Abyssinian dialects, and Arabic. Kirkham recommended us to take him as our servant, which we did; he turned out very useful, and was one of the best interpreters I ever knew.

Jan. 6.—After breakfast, and when Kirkham had left us, the weather having cleared up, I went out shooting, and walked through the jungle down to the village of Ailet. The boy who was with me was an Abyssinian Mussulman, living at Massowah, but he seemed to know all the Shoho Arabs in the village. I went into a house to look at the interior and see what it was like; it was an oblong structure built of grass, divided by a grass screen into two chambers, the door of the screen being covered by an Arab cloth. The Arab women, who were grinding corn, amused themselves by peeping at me through the ragged holes in the cloth; they were very civil, and brought me a cup of coffee. I ate my lunch and then

started with two of the boys of the village, sent by their father to show me the place where I might find "pig." I did not see anything, but my Massowah boy annoyed me very much by coolly firing at some guinea-fowl with my 16-bore gun loaded with ball, so I told him that the next time he did that I should give him a good thrashing.

I then walked on towards the little stream running from the hot springs, rather disappointed and tired. Going through the jungle I put up a dik-dik hind; this animal trotted away out of shot range, and then stopped and looked at me. I had read in some book of African sport that the curiosity of deer is extraordinary, so I squatted down and twirled my gun about much in the same way as signallers do with a signal flag. To my great astonishment the little dik-dik pricked up her ears, and gradually making little circuits approached within range; it seemed almost a pity to shoot so pretty a little animal, but I fired and rolled her over.

On my way towards home I heard in the jungle some people chattering; they were the women of the village of Ailet, gathering and cutting firewood. I was walking on when two very pretty and gracefully-shaped girls stepped out from the bushes; they were stripped to their waists in order to work more easily. Mahomed, the Massowah boy, seemed to know them,

for both of them came smiling up to him, saying, "Ah, Mahomed, how are you?" and he kissed them both. This young gentleman seems to be quite a Lothario, and knows all the girls about here. When the ceremony of kissing was over the girls saw me for the first time, and retreated like two startled gazelles.

Dik-dik flesh is very good eating; it tastes better roasted when one has bacon to add to it. The best way to cook the haunch is to lard it well with bacon fat and then roast it in Turkish fashion, skewered through with a stick.

The above applies to gazelles as well, as these animals have no fat except round their kidneys. This is also the best way to cook all birds, but the larding may be omitted.

Jan. 7.—This morning, having bade adieu to the missionaries, we started for Gindar by a short cut across the hills. The missionaries are making this road, but the jungle is not all cut yet. Our guide was Brou, the interpreter that Kirkham had given us as a servant.

Having travelled up the gorge, we passed the hot spring. Here the missionaries have built a little house for the poor sick who come to bathe. Pushing our way through thick thorny jungle we came suddenly on a beautiful valley, green and fresh-looking, with high hills in the background, one of which we were to

cross to reach Gindar. In the distance, on the side of a hill, might be seen the station of Sabargouma, where three or four Egyptian soldiers are stationed to look after the customs and Egyptian interests.

On descending the valley I resolved to try to shoot, as it looked a likely place for game, so I got my rifle and gun and started with Mahomed, the Massowah boy. Kirkham had given us a black, fat-tailed sheep of the Asmarra breed, a celebrated one in Abyssinia ; this animal followed me and assisted at the death of another dik-dik. We never killed this black sheep for eating, and he accompanied us all through Abyssinia and became a great pet in camp. I found H. at Sabargouma, where we had a little gin and water. Fisk said he saw a large hyena, but the cunning brute soon slipped out of sight. He shot a specimen or two for his collection. We then started to ascend the steep hill in front of us ; this was a lovely ride, and it reminded me very much of the Himalayas without the beautiful rhododendrons that grow there. The latter part of the ride was through an olive grove. The air on the top of these hills is most exhilarating ; I felt able to do anything, and my mind was busy imagining all kinds of sport and adventures in such a lovely country. About one in the afternoon we entered the small valley of Gindar.

Before I go on with the journey I wish to say a

little concerning Gindar, and what General Kirkham proposes doing there. Gindar is a fertile valley enclosed by hills ; south-south-west lies Debra Bizen, which rears its head high above the rest of the hills. There is a monastery on the top, and the monks are said to be rich and in great favour with King Johannes. The grass in the valley is very good ; at the time I speak of, the Shoho Arabs had driven their flocks here to graze ; and their cattle-stations are found dotted about in the little vales between the hills. The grass of the valley is intermixed with numerous sweet-smelling herbs, such as wild peppermint, thyme, etc. ; the castor-oil plant also grows wild here.

The sides of the hills are covered with wild olive groves, and in places we came across velvety lawns which reminded us of a well-kept English pleasure ground rather than the wilds of Abyssinia. Game is abundant, and elephants were in the neighbourhood, as the hunters from Adowa had been here. One of them having broken his clumsy matchlock, was obliged to return to get it mended. Koodoo, gazelle, dik-dik, and other antelopes abound, as well as many large pigs, and, as the Irishman is made to say, guinea-fowl and partridges here "jostle each other." This was, of all others, the place for us, so we determined to stay for two or three days.

Gindar has been given by the king to General Kirkham, who has built a house, and has also allowed the missionaries to build one. He intends trying to start a bazaar and small town to supply travellers going and coming to Massowah ; and also to supply the Abyssinian merchants with the little European necessities they require there without having to go into Egyptian territory to buy them, which at present they have to do at Massowah.

I thought I would take a turn with my gun ; it was a misty evening, and too late to go out shooting. I wandered over the hills, and, the light failing, I was "making tracks" for home ; it got darker and darker, and the mist got thicker. The little Galla boy that Kirkham had sent with me to show me the way, was a stranger to these hills ; he never lost heart once nor spoke a word : at last he uttered a sort of whine ; I then knew I had better trust to myself. I had seen, about a quarter of an hour before, the light of the fires of an Arab cattle station ; I resolved to try and see the light again ; so I fired my gun off twice to attract the attention of those in camp, but I was between hills, and they did not hear. I was pushing through the wet bushes when down I slipped, head over heels, on some creeper-covered rocks, but I picked myself up, with no harm beyond a fright. I was determined to find the light again ; and, forcing my way through the

jungle, as it was getting intensely dark, all of a sudden I again fell. This time I fell about twenty feet. The Galla boy was more careful, and, seeing me fall, crept along on his hands and knees, feeling his way as he went. I clutched hold of the creepers that grew on the rocks, and picked myself up. I heard water gurgling beneath, and I thought to myself it was lucky I did not fall farther, for I might have fared worse this time. I lost my felt hat, but the most extraordinary result of these false steps was that my little 16-bore gun, which I had with me, was not the least hurt, although it received several serious blows against the stones. At last I caught a glimpse of the welcome light. The cattle station was in a little vale: the smell of the cattle now guided me, and I soon found myself alongside of the thorny hedge that surrounded these camps. The women were preparing the evening meal, and when they saw me without any hat, and looking rather scared, began to laugh. This I thought unkind, so I pushed through the thorn hedge and went straight to one of the little fires. An old Arab was squatting by it. I was streaming with perspiration, and very thirsty. I asked him for a drink, and he brought me some water in a wooden bowl; no iced champagne ever tasted so good, and I swallowed it all; then I took off my coat to dry, having made up my mind that I was to stop here

for the night. At least here was a fire and a chance of some food—better than the wet jungle in any case.

The old Arab seemed to understand I was going to make myself comfortable for the night, and he went and fetched two others, younger ones, and by signs and saying the word Gindar, I made them understand that I was lost. They said they would show me the way home if I gave backsheesh. I showed them the empty lining of my pockets; one does not generally take out small change when going shooting in Africa, but this only shows how useful it is. At last they agreed to show me the way for a dollar, and the Galla boy and myself started for home; about half-way we met a Greek that Kirkham had sent out to look for me, carrying a lantern, accompanied by some native servants. I soon reached home, and Kirkham congratulated me that my first adventure in Abyssinia had not ended worse.

Our little dinner was a pleasant one, as it was increased in number by the presence of an ex-French navy captain who had joined the Commune and now was an exile in Abyssinia. He was a wild-looking old fellow, but a wonderful talker; and he and I chatted away gaily. He had come from Adowa, and, having very little money, was nearly starved on the road. He looked very pinched, and certainly disposed

of a wonderful amount of our preserved provisions with great gusto.

Jan. 8.—This morning I went out to look for pigs. I was wandering about the jungle, when I saw an animal on some rising ground, quite the size of a donkey. Whether it was the position of the ground or that the old boar—for such it turned out to be—was very large, I do not know; at all events I mistook him for a donkey, and did not fire. He whisked up his little curly tail and trotted off, followed by his spouses and some squeakers. I ran up, but they were soon lost in the thick bushes. Naturally, I was dreadfully annoyed, and resolved to let fly at everything in future.

I saw no end of guinea-fowl, but did not fire, being on the look-out for larger game. After wandering about for an hour or so, I came to the little vale in which the cattle station was, the scene of my adventure of the night before.

An old sow and two squeakers were there, enjoying the green grass. I came on them rather suddenly, and the squeakers trotted off, but as the old sow moved after them, I broke her back with a ball from my little 16-bore Purdey; she was a very old lady, with good tusks. Both the boars and sows in this part of the world have fine tusks; the boars' tusks only differing by being larger. She died very game; and as I twice drove

my knife into her throat, she was very quick with her tusks and once nearly caught my shin. I lost the rest of the afternoon's shooting, having to send back the only boy I had with me to camp, to ask for people to carry the game home. We had liver and bacon for breakfast the next morning, and it was excellent; also pork chops.

Jan. 9.—This morning, after breakfast, I went out shooting, accompanied by Brou, and saw some dik-dik, but did not fire at them, as I had already killed three specimens. We came to a large hole in a bank, not unlike a fox-earth, and I heard some beasts running about inside, which Brou said were pigs. I never heard of pigs going to ground before, but he assured me they did so in Abyssinia.

He and I set to work to stop the hole, and we put a boy over it to watch. I retired to a shady spot, and told Brou to go home and send me out some lunch, and bring people (some of our bullock-drivers and donkey-men) to try to dig out and unearth the pigs, or whatever they were. In due course of time the lunch appeared, and, shortly after, Brou, with some Shoho Arabs, our drivers. We tried very hard to get at the animals, but they beat us; the earth was too deep, and ran in among roots; the soil also was very hard for digging with such wretched tools as the Arabs brought. I longed for an English ferreter with his spade.

A Greek, named Aristides, who is engaged here for cutting wild olives for the Khedive of Egypt, came to see Kirkham. This Greek employs Abyssinians to cut the wood and send it to Egypt, where, I am told, his Highness uses it for parquet floors. I induced him to mount a spear-head I had brought out with me, on a stout stick, and it looked very well and serviceable. He said he would go out shooting with me next morning; and, as he knew every inch of the ground round Gindar, I was delighted.

The following morning we both started off at cock-crow, while the dew was on the ground, for a hill lying behind Kirkham's shanty, which he had built here. It was rather steep walking, but a lovely morning and as fresh as possible.

The Greek was in front of me tracking up a herd of Hagazin or Koodoo, when he suddenly stopped and aimed at something with my rifle that he was carrying for me. I stepped up as gently and quickly as I could, took the rifle and fired at a red-looking deer; the animal dropped like a stone. I rushed down the steep bank, and found the bullet had gone right through its head between the horns. I could not account for this, as I had aimed behind the shoulder. The Greek said that at the moment I fired, the deer turned its head round and looked at me; as the

animal was standing a good deal below me, this must have been the case.

It was a wonderfully lucky shot ; as, if the deer had bounded a few yards away wounded, the bushes in this part were so dense that it would have been rather hard to find the game. This antelope turned out to be a bush-buck, called in Abyssinia Doucoula.

The Greek and I then went to the top of the hill, having cut up and skinned the deer and sent a boy home with it ; it was a heavy load for him. My companion showed me a little bird, the honey-bird, that kept flying backwards and forwards in front of us, seemingly to lead us on. Aristides explained to me that this little bird not only leads on sportsmen to the nest of the wild bee, but also to the lairs of wild animals. Shortly afterwards the Greek stopped, and I noticed he had seen something ; they were the koodoo we had been tracking up, though I did not see them myself.

When we got to the top of the hill the view was lovely. The valley of Sabargouma lay in the distance, and beyond it the low hills between us and the sea-coast. We then returned to camp, and on the way back I took a shot at a pig with my little 16-bore gun. We had a haunch of the venison for dinner ; it was very good, but without fat.

The rain poured down the best part of the night ;

and, unluckily, we had put our beds at that end of the shanty which was most leaky. I woke up and found myself enjoying a shower-bath from the roof. H. was much in the same plight, and we were both glad when morning broke.

Jan. 12.—A good breakfast and some hot cocoa soon warmed us up, and we started for Beatmohar, the place where General Kirkham has a house. This is the first table-land of Abyssinia that one comes to, travelling by this route. Our luggage was now carried by mules, donkeys, and bullocks, driven by Shoho Arabs. It rained the whole day, so the view of the hills was spoilt, which I regretted very much. At the sides of the hills at the feet of which the path wound, it was covered with a gigantic Euphorbia, called Qualqual in Abyssinia; it is a sort of cactus, or grows like cactus, to the height of forty feet or more. When its branches are wounded, a milky juice oozes out, which is highly poisonous; if the least drop gets into one's eye it nearly blinds one. In India, in 1870, when shooting in the Himalayas, I was amusing myself with my hunting-knife by slashing at a plant, very much like this one; a drop of the juice squirted into my eye. One of the hunters, a native, brought me a sort of creeper with a leaf much like a vine. He screwed up the stalk of it, and catching the juice in the palm of his hand, offered

me some, and told me to put it in my eye ; it afforded instantaneous relief. I do not think this cure is known to the Abyssinians, as their woodcutters sometimes lose their eyesight. Later in the day, as we reached a higher altitude, we saw no more of this poisonous plant. We travelled on slowly through the mist and rain, the bullocks slipping about over the rocks, and frequently having to be reloaded, or the leather thongs which bound their baggage tightened up.

At last we came to an open dell in the hills, one of the camping-places on this road, called Mehdet. Kirkham and myself with great difficulty, and after wasting a number of matches, managed to light a fire, and we warmed up some cold venison, frying it in oil that Kirkham produced. H. did not like the dish, saying that it tasted like hair grease ; he preferred the venison *au naturel* : we ate a box of sardines, and then started again. The road became very steep ; at four in the afternoon we reached the top of the pass, a narrow gully between high rocks : there would be just room for two men to walk abreast.

The road after this for a short way was very good, like a good hill-road in the Himalayas. At the bottom of this road was a small valley, called Mailhenzee : this was to be our camping-place for the night, and one of the stages between Asmarra and Gindar. This was

the place where merchants from the interior generally stop on their way to Massowah.

There was good water in the valley ; we pitched our tents, but everything was wet and miserable. Kirkham told us that to-morrow we should be out of these rains, which I was very thankful to hear.

The cook Ali, a Cairo man, who, like all his species, did not relish this sort of life, but wished himself on board a comfortable *diabeha* navigating the Nile and smoking cigarettes in the sun, made a bad fire, and I saw very little prospect of dinner. I had to take his place ; and I concocted some soup with the help of Liebig's extract, and I made a venison stew. We ate this and then turned in as quickly as we could, before our blankets got wet with the mist.

CHAPTER IV.

A STRANGE "GET-UP"—AN UNLUCKY SHOT—CRANES—AN INSOLENT
"CHICKER"—OUR COOLIES STRIKE—FLORICAN—SERVANT HUNT-
ING—NIGHT MARCHING—FIRST SIGHT OF THE MAREB—"LONG LIE"
—COPTIC CHURCH—A PEAL OF STONE BELLS—HIGHWAY ROBBERY
—A CHASE—DOMESTIC QUARREL—LUGGAGE DIFFICULTIES—A
MOONLIGHT RACE.

Jan. 13.—We made an early start this morning, as it was a lovely day, and left the tents behind to stand and dry, as they would have been very heavy to pack wet. The General accompanied us ; he would have looked a queer figure on an Aldershot field day. He wore an undress general's uniform, with a large sword clanking by his side, sitting on an Abyssinian saddle with rather faded trappings ; he rode a mule, the sword clanking against every rock on the narrow path. We saw some partridges on the road, and I had a crack at one and wounded it, but it soon made away. Kirkham jumped off his mule and rushed after the bird, sword and all, to finish it off or catch it ; but these birds run like hares, and the game was soon lost in the thick bushes.

We went on ascending, and as we did the vegetation became thinner and thinner. At the top stunted yew-trees grew, so it must be cold here at most seasons of the year. We then went over some low hills, and at length found ourselves on a large plain, with cultivated land here and there. A flock of large cranes were flying round and round; at last they settled on a bit of ploughed land not far from the road.

I rode towards them and tried to stalk them, but they would not let me come very close. I fired my 16-bore gun into the "brown" as they rose, but it had no effect. I would recommend all future sportsmen to take out wire cartridges with them: one never knows what one may come across in a wild country, and a wire cartridge at close quarters would act like a bullet, and for long shots of course they are capital.

In the distance might be seen the village of Asmarra; the houses flat-roofed and built into the side of the low hill on which the village stands. About ten or twelve of the natives came out to meet us; they saluted us respectfully, and we touched our hats. They had come out not only to meet us but also to stop our baggage-bullocks from coming any farther than the top of the hills, as there was cattle disease among the herds of the Shoho Arabs, and an order had been issued all through Abyssinia that no cattle

were to travel, or be allowed to go to or from infected districts : this is worthy the notice of our sanitary commissioners at home. Kirkham had trotted on, to make arrangements at his house for us. We left the village of Asmarra, and on our left the ground fell ; as we rode on we passed several pools. In the distance flocks of fat-tailed sheep might be seen cropping the short grass, they were of the breed spoken of before, and celebrated throughout Abyssinia. One fat sheep costs a Maria Theresa dollar ;* but two small ones can be bought for the same money.

We saw Kirkham's little house, with a roof like an extinguisher, in front of us ; it was perched on a high cliff that overlooked the plain, which was dotted about with water-pools. Kirkham had told us they were famous places for ducks, and sometimes snipe.

We soon arrived at the house ; it was surrounded by the usual hedge to be seen round all Abyssinian houses ; this hedge is not growing, but made of thorn-branches and stakes. The few houses which composed the village of Beatmohar were close by. Kirkham at once produced some honey-wine, called "tej" in Abyssinia ; it was excellent, and proved very refreshing after our ride. "Tej" is made in the following way : to one part of honey are added seven parts of water, and well mixed ; then some leaves of a

* Value about 4s. 2d.

plant called "geshoo" are put into the mixture, to make it ferment ; it is put outside in the shade and left for a day or two. A piece of cotton cloth is strained over the mouth of the large earthenware jar, or "gumbo," and through this the "tej" is poured ; the servant tapping the cloth with his fingers to make the liquid run freely. If one wants to make it stronger, the first brew is used instead of the water ; adding honey and geshoo leaves in the same way. In the time of King Theodore that monarch had tej five years old, which made any one drunk in a very short time ; but those were the "good old times" which we read of.

We ate some lunch, and I took out my gun and went for a stroll ; I shot a large blue crane, and saw some ducks. I went out again with H. in the evening to look out for ducks ; a flock of teal just as it was getting dark came whistling over my head, but I was not quick enough for them. On my way home I shot an owl, which I presented to Fisk for stuffing. He informed me it was identically the same as the barn owl at home. I was rather disgusted, as I thought an Abyssinian owl must be different from the home species ; but he insisted that he had shot lots of them in Norfolk, and said the skin of it was not worth the carriage home. Over this I got rather "chaffed," so I resolved not to shoot any more Abyssinian owls. I

believe it is considered very unlucky to shoot an owl!

Jan. 14.—This night we were very comfortable, sleeping in a sort of divan that Kirkham had put up, round the inner room of his house. It was a great relief to know before turning into it that the sleeper would not be the unwilling victim of a leaky roof.

We had settled, H. and I, and Fisk, to go at dawn of day to try and get some duck in a pool just at the foot of the high rock on which the house stood, so next morning off we started. It was bitterly cold and a white frost on the ground. We crept down to the pool and let fly all six barrels into the middle of the flock. Sad to relate, only three fell, which were not picked up; one of Kirkham's Galla boys was sent down later in the day and discovered two.

We then proceeded up the pools; I flushed a snipe and knocked him down, he was rather a lean specimen of his kind. On our way home I saw those large cranes again coming towards me, so I squatted down as close to the ground as I could and waited; the flock kept coming on, making a great noise and screeching, but they saw me and wheeled away. One old gentleman, rather in advance of the others, wheeled rather close to me; I let fly my 16-bore No. 1 shot: it did not seem to affect him in the least, when after going a little way, all of a sudden he fell

like a stone. I ran as hard as I could and found him quite dead, with his backbone cut right through by the shot ; how he could possibly have kept flying in this state I do not know. His shank-bones will make excellent pipe stems.

The rest of this day we were engaged in again shifting our provisions, etc., into skin bags ; as boxes are very bad things to carry either by coolies, mules, or donkeys. It is the custom in Abyssinia to have all one's baggage, as far as possible, packed in these bags, and then the coolies do not mind carrying them so much. A box is so hard it hurts a man's shoulder when he carries it, and as for mules and donkeys it means sore backs at once ; besides, the leather thongs that bind the box on to the mule are always slipping. We paid a Maria Theresa for two of these bags, and found it rather difficult to get them. Kirkham had gone to Asmarra to make arrangements for coolies, and when he came back, he said everything was completed, and that we should start to-morrow at sunrise. Vain hope, as the reader will see ; for, instead of starting at sunrise, we started at sunset. The people who dwell in the gorgeous East have no idea of time, and always think that Europeans are in a hurry, and that to-morrow will do as well as to-day.

We had sent a message to Belata Keda Kedan,

the chief of this province : he lives at a town called Tzazega, about half a day's journey from Beatmohar.

Jan. 15.—In the morning no coolies appeared : one of the “chickers,” or tax collectors, or head-men of the village, was very insolent ; he brought three coolies, and asked an exorbitant price. I said I would not give it ; he then walked away laughing, followed by the coolies, saying, “Well, you won't get them at all now.” I thought to myself, “My friend, you shall pay for this.” I then politely asked him to walk into our enclosure, shut the door, and made a prisoner of him ; put a guard over him, and told him he should wait.

Kirkham's and the Galla boys were delighted ; they thought, the young rascals, there was a chance of a fight. We waited till the afternoon, when, coming across the plain, we saw the chief, followed by a large retinue, some on mules, some with shields, spears, and guns, holding little plaited straw umbrellas over their heads. I made arrangement that only the chief himself and a few of his followers should be allowed inside our little enclosure. When he arrived I met him at the door, and escorted him inside the house. We then told him all that had happened, and had the prisoner brought in. The chief questioned him, and then ordered him outside to be thrashed ; but he was not punished, as he implored to be let off, and said he

would use his best endeavours to get people of the village to carry our baggage. We gave our Egyptian soldiers a present, and they went back to Mas-sowah.

We here changed our plans, as K. said it was only a waste of time going to Adowa on our way to the shooting on the Mareb and Tackazzee, and we might do it coming back. Eventually, after the chief's soldiers and followers had hunted up the villagers, and dragged them, kicked them, and beat them, they were made to carry our baggage. We started about one hour before sunset, the coolies having gone in front. The reason that the soldiers treated the villagers in this way was, that the king, who was far away, had heard there were some Englishmen coming into the country, and had given orders to the chiefs or governors that we were to be treated with respect, and everything that we wanted done for us.

We travelled across a large table-land with not a vestige of foliage to be seen, and no sound to be heard but now and then the bleating of the sheep as they were driven to their pens near the villages for the night. The moon rose, and we very soon found ourselves near a village called Adouguada. All our coolies had stopped ; the lazy fellows had scarcely been travelling for two hours ; they had handed our

baggage over to the head-man of the village. This is a usual mode of proceeding in Abyssinia ; one is passed on from village to village, and if the villages happen to be close together the day is spent in quarrelling and in looking over and counting the baggage. When I rode up they were all talking at once and making a horrid noise, as is usual on such occasions. I asked for a hearing, and informed the villagers of Adouguada that if they did not carry our baggage I should take two cows and two sheep from the village, and stop there all that night with my servants ; under these circumstances they would have to provide us with bread, etc. Brou, the interpreter, advised me to do this ; he said, " It is the only way to get on, and you are travelling in the king's name, and can have what you want." H. then came up with K., and we procured something to eat and some coffee. The villagers made much noise and gesticulation, and then at last picked up *half* our things and went off.

We then started for Sellaadarou, the place we were going to camp at that night. It was bright moonlight, and the moon in the East, as some of my readers probably know, appears very different from our moon at home. It was a beautiful ride, but a little cold. We arrived at Sellaadarou about nine P.M., or perhaps a little later. K., like an old soldier

as he was, pitched the camp just outside the village, in a sort of little garden that the villagers had made to grow their capsicums in; it was surrounded by a thick thorn hedge, made of boughs cut from the thorny acacia. This hedge provided us with wood without any trouble; so we made two large bonfires to warm ourselves, ate some supper, and turned in after a long worrying day. The other half of the baggage had not come up when we retired to our tents.

Jan. 16: Sellaadarou.—After breakfast this morning I went out shooting, taking with me a native of the village to show me the way. I “put up” some partridges, among them a young florican, which I shot, much to the astonishment of the Abyssinian. They never can make out how birds can be shot while on the wing, as their plan is to get as near as possible, and then “pot” the birds on the ground—a very good one too, if the sportsman is hungry. I never knew before that there were floricans in Abyssinia; there are plenty in some parts of India. The bird was delicious eating. I saw two dark mouse-brown deer, but could not get at them, and, of course, for a long shot I wanted my Express rifle. When I came into camp I found that some of the villagers of Sellaadarou had carried on a few of our things. H. had been round the village with some of our ser-

vants to beat up the natives ; he said it was great fun running from house to house trying to catch the men, the women swearing that their husbands or sons were away. Abyssinian servants, on occasions like these, always filch any little things they can quietly lay their hands on, and bring them to their master afterwards ; I had on several occasions to punish servants for this, and make them take the things back. H. started in the afternoon with a little more of the baggage. I told him we must force our way on, and, as he was now on the move, to go as far as he could. It will be seen afterwards he did a capital march.

Chickut was the name of the village K. told us we could camp at. It was rather a short march, and I knew H. would go farther, for we had been very much annoyed by these continual delays, so we agreed that he should go on to the next village beyond Chickut. K. then went back to Adouguada to fetch up the other half of our baggage left behind ; I said I would wait for him. Time went on, and it got later and later. Fisk, who had stayed with me, said he would go out and try to get something good for dinner, in case we should have to stop the night here. Just at sunset I saw K. in the distance, kicking his old mule along as fast as he could ; he rode up and said Maria Theresa had won

the day—meaning the dollars. “All right,” said I; “let us have something to eat—then we must start and make a night march of it.” Fisk then came in and we made some soup.

There was nobody to carry the few things that remained here, so we determined to use our mules as pack animals and walk; and a nice walk it was, too. Fisk’s white mule, bought at Massowah, declined to keep the baggage on her back, and twice kicked all the things off, scattering them right and left. Among them was the spirit case and medicine chest; thank goodness, neither were broken. I had them made after my own fashion, so this was a severe test for them. The white mule had to be ridden after all, and poor K. had to give up his riding-mule to carry the things. We started an hour and a half after sunset,* and walked well right into Chickut, where we arrived about eight P.M. The whole village was in a deep sleep, and we were only greeted by a few barking dogs.

The road from Sellaadarou to Chickut is very rugged, and is a steep descent, but it was a lovely moonlight night, and what we could see of the view was glorious. Euphorbia, and the wild olive, formed a great feature in the magnificent scenery. Poor K. stuck to the walking well, but he had on a thin pair

* Sunset is at six P.M.

of button boots, which were rather trying to his poor feet over the rocks. He would insist that H. had stopped at Chickut, but I knew very well that he had gone on. I then told him what I had said to him before we started. We had some cold soup we brought with us, and shared a small biscuit between us. H. had taken all the provisions on in front with him.

The road descended more or less steeply from Chickut to Deeveroua, and at last we came to the Mareb. Here it is a small stream, and rises in a high mountain about four miles from this place. K. told me that the ground at the foot of the mountain was swampy, and that there were springs as well all the year round. This river Mareb is the Gash of the country in and near Kassala. In its course across the desert to Kassala its waters are absorbed by the desert sands, but it is a foaming, muddy torrent during the rains. This is one of the Nile tributaries of Abyssinia, mentioned in Sir Samuel Baker's book. I wish I had been able to fix the source of this river exactly, but I had no instruments or other appliances with which to work; I hope to do this eventually.

The village of Deeveroua, where we were to stop for the rest of the night, was on the top of the gorge through which the little stream of the Mareb runs.

A large and most beautiful tree, of the species *Ficus Indica*, spread its branches near the stream. From this we drank excellent water, and then went up to the village. After a little wandering about we found where H. had pitched K.'s tent, which he had taken on with him ; all were asleep and snoring. I had a good mind to "draw" H., but it was a quarter to eleven, so I let him repose in peace. K. roused up his Abyssinian cook, Blanche* by name, and she made us some coffee. The servants pitched our tent, and I turned in, very tired but not exhausted. It has been shrewdly observed of the air on these hills, that it is "like champagne, minus the headache."

Jan. 17.—We all took a "long lie" this Sunday morning, it being a day of rest, and when we did get up we found ourselves encamped near the village, and close to a little Coptic church. The view was extensive, while across the table-land, which was intersected by watercourses that looked like broken ditches, might be seen three pointed rocky hills which rose up out of this bare plain and formed a marked feature in the landscape. On the side of one of these hills nestled the village of Terramnee,† which was to be our next halt. After breakfast we agreed to go and see

* Her Abyssinian name was Desta, which means "happy."

† Terramnee means "stones in a row." This is a Tigré word, the name of one of the large divisions or provinces of Abyssinia.

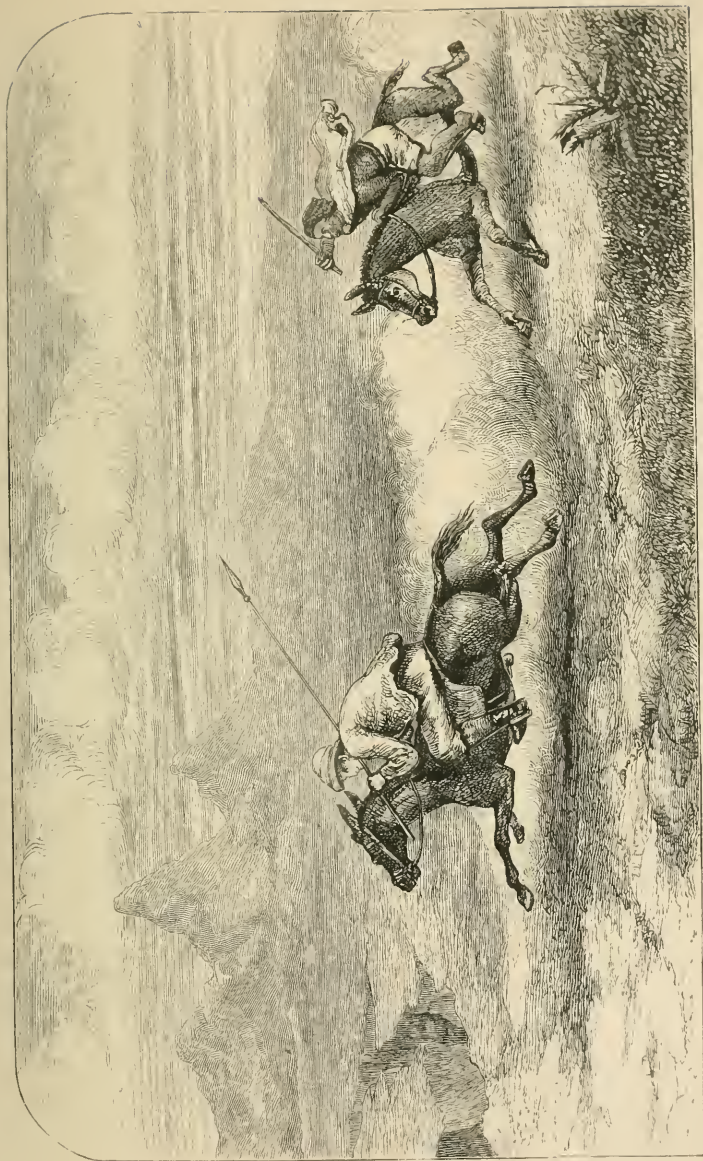
the Coptic church, so we sent to the priests to say we were coming to pay them a visit. They replied in a short time, saying they were ready to receive us, and met us at the gate of the enclosure which surrounds each of these churches ; we then walked up a narrow path to the church door. The priest and his two attendants all bowed down and touched the threshold of the church with their heads before entering ; it was a round edifice, with the usual "extinguisher" roof. A narrow passage runs round the inside of it between the outer wall and the "holy of holies," the entrance to which was covered by a sort of ragged curtain. The outside wall of the "holy of holies" was covered with rude frescoes—St. George and the Dragon, the Virgin Mary, etc. The Virgin was portrayed with very large eyes like saucers ; St. George was a meek-looking creature, sticking his spear into the dragon, but looking in an exactly opposite direction. Rude frescoes, very similar in style, may be seen at the parish church of Chaldon, near Caterham, in Surrey. As we were coming away I saw some long stones hung up by grass ropes on a pole, supported by two short sticks ; I asked what they were. They said these were used instead of church bells. They were musical stones, in fact, which, when struck, gave out a very pretty sound ; they were chosen so as to make a scale of three notes. We gave the priest a dollar for

the good of the church, at which he seemed pleased and astonished.

At Deeveroua I bought a large cured cowskin, to make sandals for our servants when we got into the jungle. This I would recommend travellers to do, as the sharp grass and thorns are too much for even the horny feet of the Abyssinians, and the cowskin proved of great use afterwards.

About mid-day I started alone with Brou, who was to show me the way to Terramnee, and to get coolies there to carry on our things to Koudoofellassic, when we should be out of this province, which we have had so much difficulty in getting through. I saw a ballaga* coming towards me, the mule he was riding kicking and plunging about as viciously as ever I saw any animal do. I said to myself, "I must make the acquaintance of this gentleman;" so I rode up to him and said, "How d'ye do?" and asked him to let me look at his spear. While I was looking at it I edged away, then, giving my mule a good kick, galloped off as hard as I could, spear and all. He was quite taken aback at first, but soon began chasing me. We had a nice little spurt, but, as bad luck would have it, one of these watercourses was in front of me, and the way

* *Ballaga* is the Amharic for a farmer, or one who cultivates land. The other three classes in Abyssinia are chiefs, soldiers or followers of chiefs, and merchants.



A RACE FOR A SPEAR.

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across it lay to my left, which would bring us almost together. He saw his chance, and whipped up his mule, who had the legs of mine, and caught me; I then pulled up, and he asked for his spear. I delayed a minute or two, and then began laughing. He seemed to understand the joke, and I gave him back his spear; he told Brou, who was following after me, that he really thought I meant to take it away from him. I heard them laughing a little way behind me. Abyssinians are very cheery fellows, always ready for a joke, provided it does not touch their pockets.

When we reached Terramnee I sent for the chicker, or head-man of the village, and they said they would go and fetch him. There was an assembly of natives in the village, all jabbering at once. I asked Brou what it was all about, and he said it was a dispute between a man and his wife; one party takes the wife's part, and another the husband's; judges are appointed, and they "jaw" away as hard as they can. Several natives had come in from neighbouring villages about this. At length, when it was over, they had the civility to attend to me: the old story—the chicker could not be found; he was in the fields; they had sent for him, etc. I asked, "Where's his house?" They showed it me, and I went up to it. The old gentleman was at the bottom of the hill which I

had gone up, and in a friend's house. I told him I wanted men to carry our things to Koudoofellassie, and he said he would do his best, but he was not chicker over all the village, and would send round to the others. H. and K., with luggage and servants, came up, and then we had a nice row; the chickers vowed they would have our things carried, but the natives would scarcely obey the chickers. I called my old friend, whom I had first seen, and told him that if we did not go on that day I should take him a prisoner to the chief at Koudoofellassie, in whose province the village of Terramnee was. Bit by bit our luggage was picked up and carried on; only the heaviest part of it remained.

The day wore on, and we got more and more impatient. At last the chicker said, "The people will not obey us; you must go round the village and beat them up with your servants." The natives were hiding away in any available corner. H. and I went into one house where we had been told there was a man; the house was quite dark inside, having no windows or openings of any sort. We struck a lucifer—I do not suppose they had ever seen one before. H. descried a man in a corner and pulled him out, but he turned out to be an aged priest, exempt from doing coolie work. The old fellow was much disturbed, but we apologised and

said we were very sorry, and he retired to his corner quietly but grumpily. Such visits as these to the houses of the natives reminded me very much of what is stated of the English soldiers hunting for rebels in 1798. We managed to get a good number of the natives unearthed. Directly one was caught he was sent off under care of one of our servants to where our after baggage was lying ; a package was given him, and he was started for Koudoofellassic immediately. The only thing that now remained was H.'s large tin case. Tuckloo, one of the chickers, said there was not a young man left in the village. I said, "It must be carried, or I tie you to my mule and take you into Koudoofellassic to the chief." He considered a moment, and then another man and himself slung it on a pole and carried it off. H., Fisk, and myself now started "by moonlight alone" for Koudoofellassic. The road lay across a plain almost all the way, so we galloped our mules along at a great pace : the old fellow, Belata Keda Kedan, sent with us to guide us safely through his province, shouting at us and telling us to take care of the holes as we rode. We raced into camp about ten P.M., yelling and shouting, being guided by the light of our fires.

We found the camp pitched and dinner ready ; K. had gone in front and done all this. Borum Bras-

wouldeselassie, the chief of this province, was waiting by the camp fire for us ; a pleasant-looking, middle-aged man, who had seen good service with the king. He said anything we wanted we were to ask him for, and he would come the first thing in the morning and see us again.

CHAPTER V.

A GENERAL BATH—RELIGIOUS PROCESSION—THE GAME OF GOUX—
DINNER-PARTY IN A STABLE—ETIQUETTE—GRAM—FRENCH LEAVE
—HOSTILITIES—A PARLEY AND RECONCILIATION—NATIVE BEER—
A WHIRLWIND—CULTIVATION—ROADS—FINE SCENERY—A TALIS-
MAN—A FIANCÉE—CAPTURE OF A GUIDE—ROBBERS AND THEIR
PUNISHMENT—THE CROPS—CAMP ON THE MAREB—TOMATOS—
LIONS—A NARROW ESCAPE—SPEAR THROWING.

Jan. 18.—To-day, after breakfast, I overhauled most of my things, guns, fishing-tackle, etc., and put them in good order. The old soldier that Belata Keda Kedan had sent with us was much interested in all he saw. I asked him if he would like to go to England. He replied, "I would go to your country if you would give me lots of tej and araké, and nothing to do." It was very amusing to see him admiring his face in a little toy looking-glass that H. had given him. He was to leave us here (Kou-doofellassie), so we gave him a present of ten Maria Theresa dollars, and he went his way rejoicing.

Borum Braswoulesclassie had come to see us before breakfast; he did not stop long, as he said

he had to go with his soldiers and followers to attend the feast of Baptism. On this day all the population of the town go down to the river and bathe; the priests pray, and I believe bathe also. After we had taken breakfast Brou told us that if we went a little way out of camp into the town we should see the priests and procession returning from the river. We stood on the top of a high mound, and very soon heard a most discordant braying of horns in the distance. The procession now approached, the priests bearing the sacred image of the Virgin, with a canopy held over it; little boys were walking in front with incense. They were singing a monotonous chant alternately, the women all taking it up at one time and the men at another. Borum Braswouleselassie and his horsemen were in front of the procession, galloping about with their horses and firing off their guns. The whole thing, except for the horsemen, looked very much like a Roman Catholic procession. They marched past us up to the church, and we saw them no more. K. said that on occasions of this sort the Abyssinian horsemen play a game called *goux*, so I begged of him to send a message to Borum Braswouleselassie, asking him to send some of his soldiers to play the game, in order that we might see it. About three or four came out on a flat piece of ground, which was the market-place, and commenced

galloping their horses at full speed and throwing their sticks at each other like spears, receiving them on their shields. I believe there is a Turkish game, called *Jerrid*, which is much the same thing. Their horses were wretched specimens—thin, bony screws, that could not gallop as fast as a person could kick his hat. I asked one of them if he would let me get up and try the game. So one of my servants asked, “Will you lend the *Feringee* your horse?” He said, “The *Feringee*! oh no,” and galloped away as hard as he could. When we had seen this, we determined to go and pay a visit to *Borum Braswoude-selassie*. We found him just about to sit down to his dinner, and he asked us to join him. My readers must not imagine a table and chairs at this entertainment, as the dinner was held in a stable; *Borum Braswoude-selassie* and his family sitting on the ground. The first thing they began to eat was some “*tef*”—a sort of spongy, sour bread, made in large thin cakes. This they dipped into a paste of red pepper, and ate it with their fingers. *Borum Bras.* had some very good “*tej*,” of which we drank. There was also some stewed meat, which was broken up in bits by the servants with their fingers, and then the dish was given to the lady of the house, who divided the portions equally and handed them to each member of the family as well as to the guests. The enormous quantity of bread and

red pepper of the most pungent kind which Abyssinians manage to get through is something extraordinary; they wash it down with plenty of "tej," which is a capital thing to take away the fiery heat the red pepper creates in the mouth. The correct thing to do at an Abyssinian dinner is to take a large bit of bread or meat in your hand and stuff it into your neighbour's mouth; this is considered the acme of good manners; also, your first glass of "tej" is generally handed to you by the master of the house.

In the evening H. and myself went out shooting, K. having told us that there were some grouse in the low hills near camp, and I shot at a young bird, but missed. The old cocks were calling just in the same way they do on a Scotch moor—the same note, but not quite so strong. I tried to approach some more, but it was very steep walking in some places, and the birds were exceedingly wild.

Jan. 19.—To-day was market-day at Koudoo-fellassie, and Brou and myself, on our way to our next camp, stopped under the shade of a small tree round which the market was held. The people were coming in fast with honey and butter, corn of different sorts, sulphur for making powder, etc. etc. The country folks directly they arrived squatted down in a line. I tried to buy a jar of honey, but of course they stuck on the price for the Feringee. About

eleven A.M., or perhaps a little before, I started with Brou for Adgousmou, the next village we were to stop at. Goubasee, who was my gun-bearer, walked the whole time in front of my mule ; I stopped under a tree for about fifteen minutes and then went on. This was a long march, and we were going fast. Goubasee eventually turned out to be, as I had thought he was, a wonderful walker, always in front of everybody in the longest march, and never shirking any difficulty that came in his way ; in fact, he was a most faithful and useful servant, the only Abyssinian among our crew whom I could really depend upon. The country we were going through was table-land intersected by broad ravines.

My servants pointed me out two large trees in the distance ; near these they said was the village of Adgousmou. Abyssinian servants have quite an original way of provisioning as they march along. If they pass any cornfields, particularly the Indian *gram*, they run into the corn and take as much as they want, not only for their own eating, but for their master's mules. This is done regardless of the shouts and imprecations of the boys who are sent out from the villages to watch the corn, perched in some places on a high heap of stones, in others on a rude platform supported on forked poles. This same *gram*, if the pods when quite green are

well-boiled, makes an excellent substitute for peas. Before going up to the village of Adgousmou we crossed a stream, where I shot a spurwing and a pigeon very like our common wood-pigeon, only not quite so large. I killed these birds in case H. should not turn up after my arrival with the tents, provisions, etc. I then rode into the village and asked for the chicker. He soon came, and was a fine-looking old man. I asked him for some bread for my servants ; he said he had none—a reply that was plainly untrue. He then sent for a bowl of sour milk, which was very nasty. I gave it to Goubasee, who soon polished it off and seemed to enjoy it immensely. The old chicker and I sat in silence for some little time enjoying the view, at least I did, and at length I arose and went away, as I saw no prospect of getting anything out of the old niggard. I settled the camp should be near some trees outside the village ; a ruined village also, probably the old village of Adgousmou, was close by. I made the servants light a fire, and I sat down to consider ; but I soon began to feel very hungry. What was to be done ? I had nothing to eat, when I suddenly bethought myself of my two birds. But how to cook them ? I adopted the old poacher's plan of spitting them on the ramrod of my rifle, and made Mahomed, the Massowah boy, roast me some corn I had taken with me for my mule.

With these victuals I made a tolerably fair lunch, washed down with water—*fames optimum condimentum*, as the Latin grammar says. It was getting late in the day and I was becoming bored, so I said to Brou, who had been loitering behind on the road and had not long come up, "We had better go to the village to forage, as perhaps there has been a difficulty about getting our baggage carried on from Koudoofellassie, and the things will not come up to-night." He answered, "Very well." So we all started to the village.

I went up to the old chicker's house and asked for bread, or, in fact, anything that he had. His wife—who was as big a liar as himself—told me that she had nothing. So I went straight in and took a large jug of beer and a jar of honey, gave them to my servants to carry, and walked back towards our future camping-place. The old lady now began to yell, and the other women of the village joined in chorus. The men in the village all turned out with spears, shields, guns, sticks, etc., and surrounded us, making a horrid noise. They managed to get the beer away from us, but we stuck to the honey, and one of the servants and myself brought it to the tree where I had been sitting. The natives continued yelling, and Brou tried to pacify them. Some of the young fellows said, "We will die! we will die! but you shall not keep the

honey"—Brou having told them I would shoot if they tried to molest me. The noise went on, and I thought it was likely to get serious, when suddenly there was a lull, and a priest stepped out from the crowd and requested a parley with me. I went up to him, and he made me a bow and said something in Amharic, which it is needless to say I did not understand. The Abyssinians are Coptic Christians, and I thought I would try him with a text from the Bible; so I said, "I asked for bread, and they gave me a stone." I never before saw a man's face change so completely; Brou had interpreted the sentence exactly. The priest then said, "You speak like a king; these people are only dirt in comparison with you," etc. Well, it all ended by my keeping the honey, and the villagers returning to their houses. We made up a good fire. Brou produced some bread, which I ate with the honey; it was excellent—stolen fruit is always the sweetest. I piled the arms near the fire, rolled myself up in a *shama* of Brou's, and lay down on a sheepskin to go to sleep. I had almost dozed off when H. arrived with all the baggage. The reason he was so late was that the men at Koudoofellassie demanded exorbitant prices. We have now twenty coolies and three donkeys to carry into Adiaboo. K. made this arrangement: so we shall have no more trouble for some little time.

Borum Bras. brought with him a man chained to one of his soldiers; this individual, who was, I believe, a murderer, was going to the king to be tried. The law in Abyssinia is the old Mosaic one—"an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth."

Jan. 20.—We started about half-past nine in the morning, accompanied by Borum Bras., the chief, and all his followers. He was to go with us as far as the boundary of his province, and there leave us. He rode a very fine mule, with his horse led in front of him. The mule turned out to be a fencer; Borum Bras. popping over a thorn hedge in very good form as we went along. We stopped for a short rest at Adwahla, a village, and Borum Bras. made his followers bring us some beer, which is made from the Dargousa grain. I thought it very nasty, but my servants soon drank it all. I saw a rather curious phenomenon here: there was a sudden rush of wind, then in a moment we were enveloped in a cloud of dust. It was one of those whirlwinds which very often occur in the East, especially on broad plains. There is not a breath of wind stirring, but, all of a sudden, you see a little curl of dust coming towards you; and it gets larger and larger as it proceeds. All the dust of the village was carried up in a column towards the skies. One of Borum Bras.'s servants, on seeing this, immediately covered me up in the cotton

cloth he was wearing ; and I scarcely know which was worse, the smell of the Abyssinian's garment or that of the dust.

All the country we had been travelling through was highly cultivated, and the ballagas were, as far as I could see, breaking up fresh land every day for sowing ; in fact, I should say that the whole province of Tigré was in a very prosperous condition. It is a great pity such a country as this, which to all intents and purposes is close to Europe, should not be made use of in some way or other. Cotton would grow in most parts with great luxuriance ; it is grown in the province of Walkait, and brought into the rest of Abyssinia by large caravans, who exchange it for grain, salt, etc. In the valleys among the hills I believe all sorts of things would grow, and in a short time I hope to send out seeds of all the English vegetables, to make a trial of them at Gindar. There is one plant which would return very high profits to the growers, and that is *cinchona*, for quinine. Where plenty of water is to be had I am sure this plant would do well. Of course the great drawback to all commerce in Abyssinia is the badness of the roads ; in fact, there are no roads, merely paths across the table-lands, and as a rule among the hills the roads follow the dry watercourses.

When Borum Bras. and his servants had had enough

beer we started again. He accompanied us to the verge of this large table-land we had been going over, and seemed very particular about the exact boundary of his province and the spot where to leave us. We got off our mules and said, "Good-bye," shaking hands with him. He wished us a pleasant journey and abundant sport; and so we parted with the most civil Abyssinian I had yet met. The ground fell very suddenly here, and we began to descend a rocky road. If I could only make the reader appreciate the beautiful scenery that now lay spread before us! but I am afraid that words would convey but a poor idea of its grandeur and beauty; so we must continue on our road. Some parts of the descent were so steep that I had to get off my mule and walk. We had thoughtlessly omitted to bring cruppers for our saddles, so we often found ourselves nearly astride of the mule's head instead of his back; the only way to remedy this was to get off and shift the saddle, which was tiresome work. K. told me that this was a fearful hill to ascend during the rains, the mules slipping about and tumbling down. We got to our camping-place about two hours before sunset—a pretty spot with plenty of grass, and the water came from deep pools close by. I took my gun and went for a stroll but saw nothing, and I only heard an old cock grouse calling. H. had gone in an opposite

direction, but he too had seen nothing to provide sport.

Jan. 21.—This morning we had time to look about us before starting; the township of Gundet lay scattered over the little hills which rose out of this valley. I resolved to go up to the village and procure a goat and some bread. K. had provided us with a document which was stamped with the king's seal; this, when the Abyssinians saw it, had the effect of making them give what was wanted. The king seldom if ever gives his seal to any one; and the seal itself, from which the impression is taken, is carried about hung round the neck of one of his page boys. I started with Goubasee and Brou for one of the cluster of huts I saw on the top of the hill; the servants said it was there the chief of the village resided. The ascent was steep, but we caught the old gentleman sitting outside his house basking in the morning sun; no doubt he would have bolted if he had had any intimation of our coming. We said, "How d'ye do?" and then I showed him the king's seal, and said we wanted a young fat goat, of which there are large herds here. The cattle of Gundet are also very fine. He said if we would come into his house he would talk about it. Well-to-do Abyssinians always have a large round hut set apart for the reception of visitors. His son produced some "tej," which

was very good, and turning round to his father just before pouring it out he said laughingly, "I don't know whether we ought to be drinking this tej, which is made for my marriage feast." I asked him if his future wife was pretty ; he said, "Oh, yes, and she has plenty of cattle." This is the usual dowry in Abyssinia, especially among the ballagas ; so my readers will see that people in that country marry for a fortune as much as ours do at home.

H. and K. now came up to the house. The fat goat was brought and given to one of the servants to drive before him ; and we started for the Mareb, where we were going to stay a little time to shoot. There was a difficulty about finding our way, so we took a guide from one of the villages as we passed. This man did not seem to understand where we wanted to go to, and took us to another village, rather out of our road. Here we had a dispute, as a man from this village refused to go with us as guide ; we tied him by his *shama* to our first guide, and sent them on in front of our mules. All the women and some of the men in the village remonstrated and made a great noise, chattering and yelling to the top of their voices ; when I ran in among them and pushed them right and left. This effectually stopped the noise, and we continued our journey in peace, while K. was much amused at my proceedings.

We passed by Aila Mareb, a village on the side of the hill. This is the last village before entering the desert, as the Abyssinians call all wild jungle ; that is to say, parts of the country that are not inhabited. On the right of the path we were travelling along rose a large hill, with a table-land at the top. The peculiar shape of it struck me very much ; as another ridge rose on the table-land, it looked in the distance like a vast breastwork. This hill overlooks a large jungled plain through which the Mareb runs—celebrated at one time as the abode of a noted “shifter,” or robber, who defied the king’s troops for some time and used to ravage the villages lying near the plain. He was caught at last ; and the king said he would not kill him, as it was a pity to send him out of the world without giving him time to repent. So his eyes were put out with a hot iron, and he was allowed to live among his family and friends. This is a good instance of Abyssinian subtlety and cruelty.

Our road now lay through thick jungle, and in some parts high grass. The hills soon ceased, and we found ourselves in the valley of the Mareb. All of a sudden, on emerging from the thick jungle, we came on a fallow field ; the crop had been reaped, and was stacked close by. The ballagas living near the valley of the Mareb very often sow crops after the rains, as the soil by the side of the river is very fertile indeed.

This crop is watched by small boys of the village, to protect it from birds, deer, elephants, etc., but in many cases the best part of it is destroyed. The crop, or rather crops—for sometimes they reap two or three—are so heavy that it does not greatly matter if a little is eaten. The dry bed of the Mareb was at the bottom of this field, and thick, impenetrable jungle rose up on all sides, so we agreed to camp in the open field by the bank of the river.

I said the river was dry ; by this I mean that the water runs under the sand, and is got at by making a hole, when it gradually filters through. The water is excellent for drinking, and deliciously cool. I ordered my servants to make a large hole in the sand, and the water here I arranged should be kept apart for our own drinking ; no one was either to wash in it or foul it in any way. It is a very good plan when near a stream to make your servants do all their washing, etc., down the stream, so as to keep the water as pure as possible for your own drinking. The time we spent on the Mareb I shall always look back to with great pleasure. Our little camp was very conveniently fixed. The jungle here teemed with all sorts of most beautiful birds, including partridges and guinea-fowl in abundance. The little sandgrouse used to come in flocks every evening to drink from the scattered pools along the

river-bed. The jungle also gave us most delicious wild tomatos, and as it was the dry season it had up to this time been almost impossible to procure any green vegetables, except the *gram* before mentioned. These tomatos were very acceptable, they were the sweetest I ever ate, far better in flavour than our own cultivated ones ; we used to make excellent salads with them, and also get them stewed. I had felt the want of green vegetables very much, and I am persuaded that, in a hot country, eating largely of provisions preserved in tins is not at all good.

The ballaga to whom the field belonged in which we were camped said a lion used frequently to come and bask in the sun and look at him while he was at his work, not taking the smallest notice. There must have been some of these animals about, as we used to see fresh tracks almost every day ; but, alas ! not one single one did we catch sight of the whole time ; and as all sportsmen know who have been in Africa, there is no animal so hard to discover or get near when seen. The lion is scarcely the noble beast which is seen represented in pictures, or read of in nursery books and fables ; on the contrary, he feeds on carrion when he can get it, and sneaks away at the approach of man. The tiger in India is a much finer animal. In the evening I went a few hundred yards



NARROW ESCAPE OF GOUBASEE.

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out of camp down the river, and shot an old cock guinea-fowl and a brace of small sandgrouse. These latter were most lovely little birds, and Fisk preserved one for H.'s collection.

Jan. 22.—I find, according to my journal, that the events of this day were most unlucky. I went up the river with Goubasee and the elephant-hunter that Brou had with him as a sort of servant. I only saw a deer cross the dry bed of the river in front of me, but out of shot. I had gone up some little way, and was resting, sitting on some large granite rocks. The force of the water during the rains must be tremendous, as these rocks were scooped and hollowed out as if by the hand of man. A large pool of water was just below me; the hot weather had not yet dried it up, and the basin of rock prevented it filtering away through the sand. My rifle lay close by me, and wishing to put it at half-cock, I touched the trigger without taking it up. By mistake I fingered the wrong one: it went off, and as nearly as possible shot Goubasee, who was reclining close beside me. He took it very well, and the elephant-hunter only laughed, and made a movement as if digging in the sand with his stick; meaning, if the ball had hit him it would have been all up with poor Goubasee, and we should have had to bury him. I got up very much disgusted with myself, and walked over the rocks on the way

back to camp, but on the way I slipped and fell, denting both the barrels of my little 16-bore. "It seldom rains but it pours!" these two accidents occurred in the space of about five minutes. The gun was rendered quite useless by this accident; so I returned home dejected, and on the way I amused myself by throwing a spear at a mark on a tree. The two Abyssinians who were with me made very good practice. It is extraordinary how hard it is to make sure of hitting anything with this weapon, though the mode of throwing it is simple enough. The spear is held in the right hand, not over the head, but about in a line with the shoulder; lightly balancing it one takes three steps, starting with the left foot, and delivers the spear as the right foot comes to the ground. King Theodore was a celebrated spear thrower; it is said he could make sure of a man at thirty yards or more. On my way home I was puzzling in my mind how to get the dented barrels of my little gun straight again. I had some hardened bullets with me for my rifle, which fitted this gun exactly, and I thought if one of these bullets was introduced into the barrel and gently and gradually tapped with one of our wooden tent-mallets it might straighten it. When I got to camp I told Fisk what I thought of it; he said he would try, and being a very handy fellow and understanding guns

well, the experiment proved a complete success, and the gun shot just as well as it did before. Of course the dents were not completely obliterated, but sufficiently for all practical purposes. I must not forget to say the barrels had been injured about half-way down from the muzzle.

CHAPTER VI.

A WART-HOG—"BRUNDO" BUTCHERING—AN "ETON BLUE" BIRD—BABOONS—DESERTED VILLAGE—ROUGH WALKING—THE ABYSSINIAN ADAM AND EVE—JEALOUSY—THE PRIESTS—SAVAGE CUSTOMS—TAMARISK COVER—NATIVE SPORTSMEN—DANCING AND SINGING—WANT OF A DOG—NEWS OF A LION—RED POCKET-HANDKERCHIEFS AND THEIR EFFECT—"BORROWED PLUMES"—THE JUNGLE ON FIRE—WE STEER WEST—"BLACKMAIL"—SUMMARY JUSTICE.

Jan. 23.—I started very early this morning, before sunrise—or with the "morning star," as the Abyssinians say—and went down the river to see what sport I could find. It was so cold that I rode out of camp on my mule, wrapped up in an Ulster. Directly the sun rose it got warm, but up to that time the air was very piercing. After going down the river some little way we came to a large field of Dargousa corn: here I stopped, and leaving my mule in care of one of the servants, determined to walk over some of the hills on the right bank of the river and see what I could find. Goubasee, my gun-bearer, was very anxious to stop and warm himself at

a fire which two of the ballagas had made in a sort of hut, which was built to live in during the time that the corn was ripening and that they were thrashing it out. These natives slept in the hut, and guarded the corn at night from the inroads of wild beasts. I told Goubasee to come on and not lag behind—as after it gets hot in this country one never sees any game, for all retire to the thick jungle. I walked up a steep hill, and soon came, at the top, on a broad level plateau. Part of this plateau was cultivated; the rest of it was short, dry grass, which reached up to the knees. It looked a very likely place for game, especially pigs or deer. I made Goubasee and another man I had with me spread out and walk through the grass, in the hopes of “putting up” something; but we saw nothing there. Where the grass ceased there was a rocky, stony piece of ground, with short, stunted trees growing on it. All of a sudden, by the side of one of these little trees, I saw a fine old boar standing. He looked steadily at me, and I looked at him—we were both very much taken by surprise, as I almost came on the top of him. The colour of this animal is so much like the dried-up ground that it is very hard at first to discern. H. had lent me his Express this morning, so I fired and hit him behind the shoulder. He galloped off, and was circling round towards me, when I gave

him the left barrel, which caught him just behind the ear ; he rolled over like a rabbit, and lay with his legs kicking in the air. He turned out to be a wart-hog. We skinned him and took off his head, which I have kept. Goubasee, while the operation of skinning was going on, cut off large lumps of the quivering flesh and stuffed them into his mouth ; he seemed to enjoy it very much. Nearly all Abyssinians eat *brundo*, which is their name for raw meat, and in consequence of this they are all affected with *tænia*, or tapeworm, and have periodically (I believe once a month) to take a very strong purgative medicine, which they call *cousou*. This destroys the worm for a time, but it always reappears again. By reason of this, nearly all Abyssinian men are very hollow-cheeked, and some of them exceedingly thin ; but, notwithstanding this, their powers of marching long distances over their hills with very little food is something marvellous.

When we had skinned the wart-hog and taken away what we wanted for food, we hung up the carcase in a tree. Before going any farther I wish to recommend all sportsmen who go out to wild countries to learn a little butchering before leaving home ; it is most useful not only to know how to cut up a beast, but also to know the different parts of the animal, their names, and what to reject and what to keep for

food, and how to remove the parts from the carcase. Almost any afternoon at the slaughtering-houses of the live meat market near the Great Northern Railway, London, the butchers may be seen killing, skinning, and dressing for the dead meat market, both mutton and beef, and for a small gratuity they are very ready to give any information.

I sent home one of the servants with the skin and the head, and went on to look for more game with Goubasee. I saw in the distance a rather curiously-forked stick, as I thought ; it was just over the top of the grass. I never suspected for an instant that this was an animal, so did not attempt to stalk in any way, but walked straight on. To my great surprise, however, I saw a beautiful, light red-coloured deer lying just at the edge of the dry grass near an open space. Of course when the animal saw me it jumped up and bounded away at full speed ; I took a snap shot—and missed. This is a good instance of how difficult it is when one first goes into a strange country to distinguish game, for it is some little time before the eye gets accustomed to the strange scenery, and the ear to the unfamiliar noises and sounds that are heard in a wild jungle. The forked stick, as I thought it, was the two little pointed ears of the deer. I now walked round this small plateau, and determined to make for my mule and go home

to breakfast, as it was getting hot. H. as well had been out in the morning, and had seen a large herd of Hagazin or koodoo, but could not get near them. There was a very beautiful bird to be seen in this jungle near the Mareb, in shape like an English cuckoo, but of a very lovely light blue; as most of my readers will know the tint of Eton blue, it was almost exactly that colour. We shot several specimens, which Fisk preserved. I had seen, the evening before, a pair of wild geese in a pool down the river, so I went out to try and get a shot at them. I told K. that I was going to shoot them both at one shot if I could; he said, "They are a great deal too shy, you won't get near them." I went down the river, when, lo, I saw my two friends swimming about in a small pool. I fired at them with my 16-bore No. 1 shot, killing the gander outright. The goose flapped on a little way, and I thought I had not got her, when Goubasee, who was with me, rushed off down the river, having heard a faint cackle in the distance, and came back with the goose in his hand. It was very lucky that the bird made any sound at all, as it was nearly pitch dark. I came back to camp triumphantly with my two geese, and the next evening we had them roasted and stuffed with onions—they were excellent, and were among the few things in Abyssinia that I had tasted really good.

Jan. 24.—I started very early indeed this morning—in fact, by moonlight—in order to get on the ground where I thought I should find game, before the heat arose. The day before, I had seen a conically-shaped mountain lying north of where I had been shooting. Instead of leaving my mule in the cultivated ground near the river, I turned up a path on the right bank of the river, and rode some little way into the hills. I left my mule on a little eminence just below the edge of the table-land which I had shot over the day before, and walked on towards the mountain. I saw nothing but tracks of deer till I got nearly to the top, and it was a very steep climb indeed. On a little open space just below the summit of the mountain I saw some jungle fowl pecking; they were not in the least like the Indian jungle fowl but brown-looking birds; in fact, they had the same colour throughout, and exactly the shape of little bantam hens. Unluckily, I had not my shot gun with me, as I would have given much to have shot one of these little creatures; but they ran away into the jungle in a long file, and I did not see them again. I now made for the summit of the mountain. There was a small, thickly-wooded hollow just below where I was climbing, and I thought very likely there might be something lying in it, so I picked up a stone and rolled it down, when out leaped two of those mouse-

brown deer that I had seen at Sellaadarou ; they rushed away through the jungle, and I could only get a snap shot at them, but managed to hit one of them. I then climbed to the top of the mountain, on my way towards which, I had heard a great number of baboons chattering among the rocks, but when they saw me they all scampered away.

At the top, to my great astonishment, I found a small level plateau and the ruins of a village ; the circular walls of the huts were still standing, and broken pottery was lying about in all directions. This, most likely, was one of the villages that the robber of the Mareb devastated, of whom I have spoken before. What struck me most was how and where the villagers got their water, as the country round here was particularly dry ; they must have gone to the Mareb for it, which was at some distance. I searched all about the mountain in hopes of finding a spring, as I was very thirsty myself, but there was no such thing to be seen. I was a little tired with the climbing, so, getting under the shade of one of the ruined walls, I curled myself up and went to sleep for nearly an hour, Goubasee squatting close by, watching me like a dog. When I awoke the sun was high, so I thought I had better go home to breakfast, and went down the opposite side of the mountain to that I had come up. I saw my mule

like a speck in the distance, and made straight across country for it, much to the chagrin of my gun-bearer, who wished to go by a path which lay rather out of the straight line. It was a heavy walk, as the jungle was very thick; in fact, in one patch of thorns I found myself completely suspended. My face and hands were torn, but at length I reached my mule, feeling very fatigued, as the walk had been a long one. When back in camp I arranged that K., together with Cassa, one of our head servants who had charge of our transport arrangements, should go on to Adiaboo with our heavy baggage, and that we should change our camp some little way down the river in order to shoot over fresh ground. I went out of camp in the evening, and a little way down the river I heard a great rush in the jungle on the bank. My gun-bearer said it was a lion, when I sat down and waited for some little time, but I could hear no sound, nor could I see anything, so I went home to dinner.

K. and I after dinner, over the camp-fire, were talking of the Abyssinians and their religion. He said that their version of the "fall of man" was rather curious. It was this: Adam and Eve, who lived in a beautiful garden, were happy and contented, till one day the serpent came and said to Eve, "Where is Adam?" She answered, "He is in another

part of the garden." So the serpent sneeringly said, "Oh, indeed, do you think so?" Eve rejoined, "For what reason do you sneer?" The serpent replied, "You think yourself the only woman in the world?" and she said, "Yes, and a most beautiful woman." The serpent then said, "Adam often stays away from you, does he not, now? I will show you another woman;" on which he produced a looking-glass. Eve saw her image reflected in it and immediately became jealous. The serpent then said, "If you wish to secure Adam's love for ever and ever, you must eat of the fruit which I will point out to you." So came about the fall of man, according to Abyssinians. This is quite consistent with Abyssinian character and ideas, as probably no people are more vain or conceited than they; jealousy in all things is one of their chief failings. Abyssinians, in their religion, are great bigots, and the whole country is very much at the present time under the influence of the priests. The king himself is very particular about his religious observances, and priests and monasteries are very often richly endowed. The Abyssinians' hatred of the Mussulman is extreme. They have always looked upon the Egyptians with great abhorrence as well as terror, for already part of their country called Bogos has been annexed by them. They think that the Mussulman will try and overrun

the whole of Abyssinia, and, according to events that are now taking place, this does not seem at all improbable.

An Abyssinian is thought a great deal of if he goes to Jerusalem, and they always think that the Turk is going to destroy the holy places and sweep away the relics that are kept there.

It may not be known to some of my readers that the Queen of Sheba is supposed to have ruled over Abyssinia, and at that time the country was evidently a great deal more prosperous and civilised than it is now. Elephants are said to have been used as beasts of burden ; nowadays, the natives have not the smallest idea of taming this most useful animal. There exist large ruins of palaces both at Goujam and at Gindar, which testify to the wealth and magnificence the country originally boasted of. It seems to me a great pity that a country which is comparatively so near Europe, and with a good seaboard, should be so completely lost to the world. What few Abyssinian chiefs I saw always impressed upon me that we, the English, ought to come and live in the country. They had formed, I am sure, a great opinion of England's wealth and power from what they saw and also heard of the Abyssinian expedition. I was told at Massowah that an enormous quantity of material of different sorts, that had been left behind after the war, quite

made the fortune of a tribe that lived on the coast ; for they sold all these materials at Massowah to the Egyptian government. It forcibly struck me, while travelling over these fertile lands, what an extensive field there is for British industry and enterprise. Abyssinia contains considerable mineral wealth ; but whether it is sufficiently localised to make its working remunerative remains to be discovered. I tried to get some information on this point from the French bishop of Keren, who came down to Massowah with us, and he told me he thought that minerals were not to be profitably worked with the present means of transport. K. often assured me that he had seen unmistakable evidences of gold. If once there was a gold rush to this country, it would certainly open it up in a way ; but the experience of other countries makes one doubt whether such would prove a desirable commencement to civilisation.

Very often on riding into the village I was greeted by the Mussulman salutation of "*Salaam*," and they always asked my servants if I was a Mussulman. It was explained to them I was really a Christian, at which they were much astonished. All the priests in Abyssinia that I happened to meet I found to be very sensible fellows ; in fact, they are the only educated members of the community. They dislike European missionaries for the reason that the missionaries educate

the people, which education the priests endeavour to check as much as possible. There is a country much nearer home than Abyssinia which was, up to a short time since, much in the same state; in fact, that expression of "priest-ridden country" may be applied to Abyssinia with as much force as it used to be applied to the Sister Isle.

Before I go farther, I must mention that at this camp we killed a cow for the benefit of our coolies and servants, who ate it raw. K. had done this while we were out of camp, so I did not see the squabble which ensued. The bits were shared out equally, but one of the men complained, said his quantity was short, and he threw it at the man's head who was dividing the portions. Then a general row ensued, and they might be seen running about the camp tearing lumps of raw flesh out of each other's hands and cramming them into their mouths to get rid of them as quickly as possible, much in the same way as a pack of hounds would break up a fox. When an Abyssinian sees or scents raw flesh he becomes a perfectly wild savage; and the women eat *brundo* as well as the men.

Jan. 25.—In the afternoon, H. and I started down the March, intending to go a short way and then pitch our camp. We followed the bank of the river, but it was very deep walking, as the damp sand gave

way under the mules. I very nearly got bogged, only just slipping off my mule in time, and directly the weight was off his back he recovered himself. The banks of the river, on both sides, were fringed with tamarisk bushes, which form a thick cover, a favourite one in India for tigers. We fixed our camp at the place where the Zareena joins the Mareb; at this time of the year—that is to say, the hot weather—the Zareena is a beautiful running stream, and the water, the servants told us, was considered excellent. We pitched our tent on the shingly bed of the Mareb, and I amused myself, with the help of my gun-bearers, by getting firewood for the night, as Fisk and the luggage had not come up yet. On the way here we passed some Abyssinians sitting in a small bower, made of branches, which was constructed over a water pool. They had come down from the villages to hunt—that is to say, to squat over the pool watching in turns, night and day, for any animal that might chance to come and drink. I do not think they killed much game, and they seemed to spend most of their time smoking a pipe, a rude sort of hookah, with a cocoa-nut as the receptacle for the water that the smoke passed through.

This evening I assembled our servants and coolies and induced them to give us a dance and song in their own fashion, I accompanying them on my banjo.

which I had brought with me. The dancing was rather curious : all stood round in a circle singing a monotonous chant and clapping their hands ; one stood out in the circle and went through extraordinary contortions, throwing his body backwards as far as possible and then twisting quickly round. In one part of the dance they all squatted down and wriggled their bodies about, making a sort of hissing noise with their teeth. I requested Brou to translate the words of the song, which were, "Plough, ploughman, plough, nor turn your attention to merchandise ;" this meant, of course, stay at home, till your land, and lead a quiet life ; do not seek other riches in far countries. It was repeated over and over again, like most Eastern songs ; and they would have gone on all night, I believe, if we had allowed them.

Jan. 26.—I went out in the morning at day-break and saw literally nothing but a dik-dik. There are vast quantities of partridges amongst the tamarisk bushes, which Fisk shoots for the pot with great success. I always regret not having brought out a dog of some sort or other, as dogs are always useful for retrieving birds. I frequently came across the tracks of koodoo, but never saw one. H. told me, when he came back to camp, that he had "rolled over" a deer, and, on running up to secure him, the animal staggered away amongst the high grass and jungle and

was lost. This was very bad luck, as it was the first deer he had hit. I went down the river in the evening, a very beautiful walk ; the Mareb wound in some places among rocks, in others through thick jungle. I stopped to rest for a short time ; a little gazelle ran out and crossed the river bed a little way off. I shot with my muzzle-loading rifle, and missed. This was another chance gone for the Express. I found when I got back to camp that some natives had been in ; in fact, they were the sportsmen whom we saw in their hut beside the pool. They told us that a lion, a month ago, had killed a man and eight cows, but this was not of much use to us now. Why is it in all sport, whether hunting, shooting, or fishing, you hear that you ought to have been there the other day, or else it is too early—you ought to have come later ; the ground is very hard, or the scent bad ; the birds are still wild ; or else, when you go fishing, the water is thick, or the fish are not on the feed, etc., etc. ?

Jan. 27.—I went out this morning with two of the native hunters who had come into camp the day before. We wandered over the hills, but I did not succeed in shooting anything, and only saw two gazelles scouring away in the distance. On the table-land, where I found these gazelles, there was a very singular cavity in the rocks, just on the edge of a cliff ; it was almost as if it had been hollowed out by the hand of man ; it

was oblong-shaped, and it could easily have held two or three hundred people. The day was very hot, and the sun beat down on the dry rocks, so I made the best of my way down the steep side of the hill into the bed of the Mareb, which ran underneath. On the way home I fired at a white eagle with my rifle, and picked him off the top of the tree he was perched on, but the bullet had so injured the bird that he was not worth preserving. This was really a bad morning's sport. H. had done no better than myself; and it was a good deal owing to this that we determined to move off the next day. This afternoon I presented the hunters, who had been out with me, with three common cotton pocket-handkerchiefs, of which I had bought a good many at Bologna, in Italy, on my way out. They seemed to be delighted with them, and grinned and laughed, and passed them round for each other to admire.

After luncheon, H. and I determined to ride down the Mareb and explore that line of country. We had not gone very far before we saw our friends the hunters sitting round a small pool of water, then tying the handkerchiefs round their heads and admiring themselves, using the water as a looking-glass. They looked very ridiculous, and seemed highly delighted with their personal appearance, which they evidently felt was greatly improved by the red cotton

handkerchiefs. We rode a good way down the river, and the farther we went the fewer the little pools of water became : at last there was no water to be seen, the sand had gradually absorbed it ; and we should have to dig four or five feet in order to get water here, so it would be of very little use to go down into the jungle by this route. H. and I amused ourselves by setting fire to the jungle, in hopes of starting some animal, but we saw nothing and so turned our mules' heads towards home. It is interesting in this country to see, while jungle is burning ; this it is always doing during the dry weather—the number of birds—insect-catchers—hovering over the flames and catching any flies, beetles, or butterflies, that happen to be driven out of the grass and bushes by the smoke and heat.

Jan. 28.—To-day we started at 8.30 for Adiaboo. We went up the bed of the Zareena for a short way and then turned off sharp to the right ; this will be better understood by my readers when I say that, after turning to the right, we began travelling very nearly due west. The road was merely a jungle path, and the bushes were in some places very thick, which scratched our knees as we pushed through them. Sometimes we rode up the dry bed of a watercourse, at other times we struck right into the thorny forest of mimosa bushes. At last we came to

a more civilised part of the country, and halted in the bed of a small river called Maitumloo, where at some deep pools the cattle were being watered by the boys of the village, who were minding them. Here we stopped for about half an hour, watering our mules and resting ourselves; we then made for the village of Zadawalka. We did not actually go straight up to the village, but camped in the usual camping-place for travellers who go by this route, that is to say, close to the water, of which there was a large pool here. We pitched our tent on a little ledge just over the pool, where there was barely room for the tent and the camp fire. We had got in early this afternoon, having come along at a pretty good pace; Petros and Hadji Mahomet had happened to lose their way in the jungle, and did not come at all that evening.

Our coolies that we had brought from Koudoo-fellassie, had, as is usual with most blacks when they travel, brought very little food with them, for when natives go a journey it is usually a succession of forced marches, which they manage to do with wonderfully little nourishment. They were all seated at the pool, having washed off the dust of the journey, talking and chattering, when there appeared in sight some villagers, who Brou, the interpreter, told me were returning from a funeral feast. Of course

the coolies understood very well the state of affairs. The natives at feasts in this country not only eat as much as they can, but also contrive to take away with them what they cannot manage to cram down their throats ; so here was a prospect of a good meal for our coolies. A rush was made at a batch of small boys and men who were returning, their clothes were almost torn off their backs, and the bread and "tef" which they had concealed about their persons were seized and devoured by our hungry men. This was the first batch of visitors, and our men were in anticipation of more coming. At last some more appeared, this time bearing a large earthenware jar, which was thought to contain beer, but, alas ! it was empty. There were other natives that our men thought had some bread with them, and they accordingly hustled them, but found none. During the struggle, a coolie was pushed backwards into the muddy pool, and was rather astonished to find himself seated in the water, much to the amusement of ourselves and all the servants but himself: he sneaked back and sat down by the fire to dry the few rags he had on him as best he could. Three or four more villagers came by, among them two young Abyssinians, who said, "You have been robbing our people—you will see what we will do to you to-morrow!" I think they were a little the worse

for the "tej" and beer they had been drinking, as they boasted and were very impudent. At last they got a little too "cheeky," saying, "You are a Rass" (which means a lord, in Abyssinia), "and ought to know better than let your servants do this." This rather annoyed me, so I jumped across the stream, snatched one of the sticks out of their hands, and gave them two or three cuts across the back, as hard as I could, and told the interpreter to tell them that was the way a Rass was accustomed to treat people who were impudent; so they went away rather frightened, amid the jeers of the servants and coolies.

My readers may think this was rather a summary proceeding, especially as our servants had been robbing the people of their bread; but it is a thing always taken for granted, as people are supposed to be hungry when they are travelling, and those that were robbed took it as a very good joke, and laughed and chaffed, especially when they were searched and found to have no victuals of any description concealed on their persons. My grey mule, which K. gave me at Gindar, had a sore back, and I was afraid he would only just be able to take me into Adiaboo, where I should have to give him up and get another.

CHAPTER VII.

A LONG MARCH—A NATIVE GARDEN—COOLIES AND THE WAY TO TREAT THEM—MARKETS—A BATTLE-FIELD—COOL SHADE—"THE FIRST POST"—SHIELDS AND SPEARS—JOHN—POTATOES—SILVER-SMITHS—A NEW FRIEND—COOLIE SQUABBLES—AN APPEAL—DONKEY BUYING—SHOE-MAKING—A BIRD'S-EYE VIEW OF OUR ROUTE—SOURCES OF THE TACKAZZEE—MARRIAGE FESTIVITIES—I TURN SURGEON—A MUSICAL PARTY—MY REPUTATION AS A DOCTOR.

Jan. 29.—To-day we made a very long march, in fact, the longest we had made since we had been in the country. We started at 7 o'clock in the morning, leaving the village of Zadawalka on our right, and we struck across the table-land in front of us, which was intersected by a large ravine. The scenery on the table-land was lovely, and the streams became more frequent. Towards the middle of the day we reached a very extensive plain; in the distance might be seen the high-peaked hill which marks Adiaboo. It is just below this, and in the shade of a large tree, that the market of Adiaboo is held every Saturday. The principal village on the plain was one called Sememmar. We got off our mules and went to forage

among the houses for some honey ; and the natives sold us a large gumbo, or jar, full of honey, for a dollar. They were very civil, but, as usual, our servants amused themselves by purloining as many little things and eatables as they could lay their hands on. We agreed to camp by a stream which was a little way on, and where the table-land ended, called Mailhumloo. The descent down into the little valley, or ravine, was very pretty, and when we got down to the bottom the country was almost like a pleasure-ground, rills of trickling water ran across our path, and various shrubs bearing sweet-smelling flowers grew in every direction ; it only wanted neat gravel walks to make it the most perfect of gardens. We fixed our camp by the side of the stream. Any future traveller would know the spot very well, as a white-faced rock rises up from the stream, with bushes growing over it.

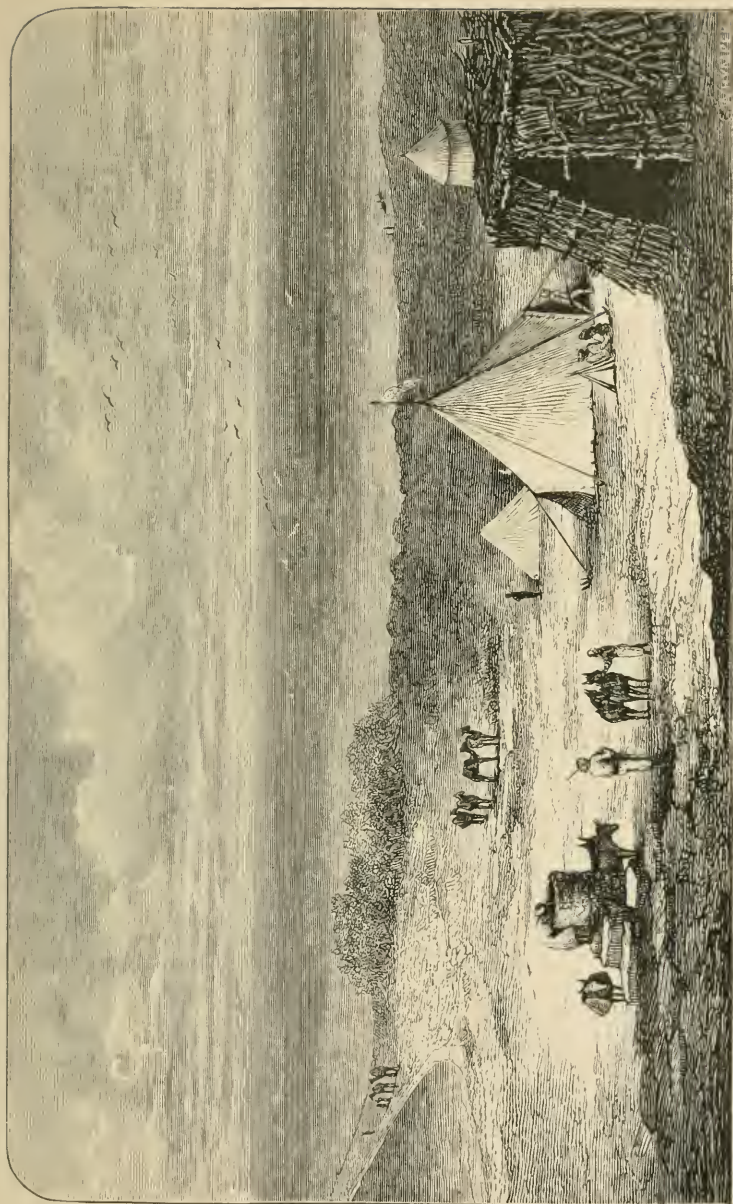
An old lady in the village had asked me if I should like to buy some Dargousa spirit ; I told her if she liked to bring it down to our camp that I would purchase it. Accordingly she followed us down and produced two bottles of this native spirit, which I thought would be a good thing to give to our coolies, as they had had an exceedingly long march and were completely done up, and when we halted they most of them lay down unable to move. One

of them was utterly exhausted, and said he was dying. I imagined it would be a good idea to serve them all with honey, of which they are very fond, and accordingly I made them come forward, and gave them each a large handful of honey. Directly the dying coolie heard that this honey was being given he appeared to get wonderfully better, and jumped up and came for his share. He had given a good deal of trouble on the march and always lagged behind, calling on the other coolies to carry his load ; so I said he was not to have any, and I did not give him any. These natives have to be treated like children in every respect. I had arrived at the place where I fixed the camp a little before H., and, hearing some wild geese cackling up the stream, I took my gun and went to try to bag one of them for dinner. I fired at them and missed. Not many seconds after firing H. appeared from behind some bushes, and we discovered we had both been stalking the same geese. It is very lucky I did not pepper him. He seemed a little annoyed ; but this sort of thing very often occurs when two fellows are shooting together in a wild country. I went out by myself afterwards to try and get some partridges, as I heard a few calling to each other near camp. I managed to kill a brace, and they proved very acceptable food after our long and tedious march.

Half-way on our journey here we came to the market-place of Sememmar ; the market is held in a sort of hollow dell by the side of the path that we travelled along. It was a very picturesque sight looking down on the market, the people seated round the sides of a hill like an amphitheatre. Of course we got down to inspect the wares offered for sale : beads, needles, buttons, were among the articles, as well as antimony for blacking the eyebrows and eye-lashes of Abyssinian ladies. There was also a good deal of cotton and grain for sale. The only thing I purchased was a native sword, which cost a dollar, and which I handed over to Goubasee, my gun-bearer, to carry for me. This sword was made, like some of the Indian tulwars, of very soft iron, but sharpened like a razor. Its shape was well adapted for cutting, slightly curved, and the back of the broad blade was heavy and thick. The worst part of an Abyssinian sword is its handle, which is made of wood, with no guard whatsoever. Generally, when a native goes into battle, he ties the handle of his sword round his wrist with a piece of rag or handkerchief. There is also another description of sword which they carry. This is a much lighter one, and very much curved, even more so than a Turkish scimitar. I had no opportunity of seeing a native use the sword. What they seemed to excel in most was throwing the spear.

Jan. 30.—This morning we did not start till much later, as the whole of the party were rather knocked up by the march of the day before. The country was very lovely that we travelled through. The path rose until we found ourselves on a very extensive plain : as we travelled over it, one of my gun-bearers pointed out a place, south of the route we pursued, where the king of Abyssinia had had a great battle with the Gallas, on which occasion three hundred of the Galla horsemen rode over a sheer precipice, nearly every one of them being killed. I trotted on across the plain towards Adiaboo, and the large peaked hill appeared nearer and nearer. I forgot to say that, before we started this morning, I managed to bag one of the wild geese which we had seen, and stalked unsuccessfully, the night before. These birds are most excellent eating, and they and the partridges are nearly the best food in the shape of game that is found in Abyssinia, but the guinea-fowl are nearly always tough.

It was market-day at Adiaboo, a much larger affair than at Sememmar the day before, and a considerable gathering of people were here, all chattering and making a great noise, it being the busiest time. I asked some of the bystanders where K. was, and where our camp was pitched. They pointed a little farther on, and I soon saw K.'s tent and a "das" built close by. A das is a sort of bower made of boughs



OUR CAMP AT MASSOWAHL.

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which Abyssinian servants in a very short time put up. It is made of four tall forked poles ; over these are laid boughs which are again interlaced with other boughs. It makes a delightfully cool shade for the middle of the day, and we always used to live in one when we were in camp during the day, but of course we slept in our tent at night. A "das" was very necessary here, as there was no shade to be found for some distance round. K. was very pleased to see us. He had come a shorter route, and his party had almost lost their way and been very hard pressed for water. He said he had been very ill on the journey, and scarcely able to ride his mule. The black sheep that, my readers will remember, we had made a pet of was completely worn out, and was carried, the greater part of the journey, by one of the servants.

K. had told me that Rass Barea, the chief of Tigré, had written to the chief of Adiaboo to say that hunters were to be placed at our disposal, and that men were to accompany us down into the country where elephants and other large game were to be found. Adik, the chief of Adiaboo, was in camp ready to pay his compliments and to ask us what we wanted. He and his followers all sat on the ground a short way off, with their shamas thrown across their shoulders and covering their mouths ; this is always considered, in Abyssinia, a most dignified position. Here we found

letters from home waiting for us, which of course we were very pleased to get. Any scrap of news from his own country and friends, to a traveller quite out of the march of civilisation, is a great luxury. H. had not come in when I arrived, as I had gone on rather fast in front of him : there were also letters for him, so I took them and walked a little way out of the camp to meet him with them, and never saw anybody so delighted ; in fact, we were both in the best of spirits. After I had read the letters, I asked K. to come round the market of Adiaboo with me to see the people, and also to look if there was anything worth buying.

The large tree, mentioned before, was the centre of attraction, and those who brought horses with them had them tied up under the shade of the tree. The tree was hung all round with shields, some for sale and others belonging to the owners of the horses ; as every Abyssinian, whenever he goes even the shortest way from home, always takes with him his shield and his spear—just in the same way as an Irishman carries his stick. I bought two shields for five dollars ; one I gave to Goubasee, my gun-bearer, and the other to Guyndem, my second gun-bearer : they both seemed mightily pleased and proud, and said they would take the greatest care of them. The shields were made of the skin of a species of large deer ; they were thick

and tough. The old merchant from whom I bought them was a very communicative person ; he had a large silver ring on his finger which I admired ; he very kindly took it off, and said he would give it to me. I, of course, said no ; but, as he still pressed, I said, well, I would pay him a little more for the shields—which arrangement he seemed to agree to. The rest of the day we spent in reading our letters and discussing the contents of all of them, and also in writing others in return, as there would be no chance of sending messengers to the post after we left Adiaboo.

A man named John—at least that was the name he went by—had come into our camp from Adowa ; he was said to be the son of an Englishman who had been in the country some time before. He stood about six feet two, and would have been rather good-looking but that he was marked with small-pox. He brought a very welcome present to us, and that was some potatoes. These vegetables are only grown near Adowa, as it is only within a few years that they have been introduced into the country, to which they were brought by a Frenchman, whose name, we hope, will be as immortal as that of Sir Walter Raleigh. The potatoes were very small, in fact, wretched-looking things, but were excellent eating ; and we were very glad to get them, as we had been excessively hard up for vegetables ; in fact, we had had scarcely any since

leaving Gindar. John said he would go down into the jungle with us. The only words of English he knew were, "How do you do?" and "Good morning," which he uttered whenever one addressed him. His trade was that of a silversmith, in Adowa, which I am told is a very lucrative one, as dollars are given to make into silver ornaments, such as the decorations of a shield, etc., and then as the dollars, which are already of rather base metal, are mixed with a good amount of tin, by the time the ornaments are made there is not much original metal left in them. Mansfield Parkyns, in his very entertaining book on Abyssinia, gives an account of the silversmiths at Adowa. One of the young chiefs at Adiaboo, a relation of Adik the old chief, also said he would go down into the jungle with us and help us to hunt. This young man was about eighteen or nineteen, and was accompanied by a sort of bear-leader, a much older Abyssinian, who, in fact, had been his tutor all his life—a man named Barrakee. This old fellow was chief of a small village on the frontiers of Abyssinia, and close to the Baria tribe. Some part of the Baria country is supposed to belong to Abyssinia; and Barrakee told us that he actually received tribute of wild honey and other small things from the Baria. This man played a very important part during the rest of our journey; and, when the young chief left us while

we were on the Tackazzee, he chose to stay behind to help in the hunting and to guide us through this part of the country, which he knew very well.

Jan. 31.—To-day we killed a young cow in camp, and also paid our coolies who had come from Koudoo-fellassie. The coolies, after they had been paid, could not agree upon the division of some extra money that had been given them—in fact, the man who gave the most trouble about it was my old friend who had shammed ill while travelling up to our last camp. They all came to me to settle the dispute ; and, after one party had arranged themselves on one side, and the other party on the other—the latter consisting of only one—I heard the cause of dispute. It was very clear that the coolie who had shammed ill wanted to get the best of his friends ; so, as most of the rest were against him, I said, “Two heads are better than one—and you must give up your claim.” The men in whose favour the decision had been given went away shouting, laughing, and dancing about ; the beaten party retired rather crestfallen. I asked if any of them would volunteer to come down into the jungle with us. There was one young fellow among them who had always been first on the march, and when in camp always singing and laughing. I particularly wanted to get him as a servant ; but he said he had a wife and family and could not manage to come.

After a deal of persuasion I got one of them to stay, a man named Philookus. I think most of them thought that they had had enough of marching, and, if the marches in future were to be anything like the two former ones, they were quite right in turning back.

It is a great mistake, during travelling in rough countries, to force your marches ; it not only tires yourself and harasses your coolies, but also wears out your beasts of burden, a most important consideration. The Italian proverb, *Che va piano va sano*, is daily exemplified when you are away from civilisation and railways. The best method is to start early in the morning, make a short march, and then rest during the heat of the day. After everybody and all the beasts are well rested start again, and get into camp in good time before the sun goes down, so as to get everything comfortable and snug for the night. By the bye, one is very much struck, on first arriving in the East, by the astonishment with which the natives receive an Englishman's protestations that he is in a hurry—that he must go on at once. I believe Arabs have a saying, in the spirit of which they certainly act, that “haste is devilish.”

A number of little sand-grouse, early in the morning, had come circling round the tent and settling on some ploughed ground close to us ; I went out and killed a brace and a half. These little birds are very good

eating, one part of their flesh being white and the other brown. We agreed to-day that here at Adiaboo we should buy donkeys to carry our things down to the Tackazzee, so we told the chief to get us as many as he could. He said that to-morrow he would tell the people round to bring in what donkeys they had for sale. I went out in the evening into the marshy ground which lay below our camp, to try to get some snipe ; I only saw one, but he was too far off for a shot. We had a very good dinner to-night, for we had killed fresh meat, which we were very glad to get, as the two days that we had been travelling we had had very little with us, although K. had made every preparation for us, and boiled down some excellent jelly, which he had corked up in a few empty gin-bottles and carefully placed in H.'s tin-case among his clothes ; but, whether it was the heat or the shaking that the tin-case got on the journey I do not know : when we opened it, in order to take some jelly for soup, we found that the corks had flown out of the bottles, and a sort of mayonnaise had been made of H.'s socks, boots, and trousers. Such are the pleasures of rough travelling !

Feb. 1.—To-day we began buying donkeys, and a more disagreeable task I had never had to do ; such haggling and bargaining as had to be undergone was enough to drive one mad. They brought up the

donkeys sometimes singly and sometimes in pairs ; we had on an average to pay six dollars a-piece for them, which was a great deal too much. This included the pads on which the package was strapped, and also the "mechanias," or leather thongs which strap the baggage on. The only thing to be assured of in buying donkeys is that they are not suffering from recent sores on their backs ; and a very good way of testing their strength is to put both hands in the small of their back and to press down with all your weight : a good donkey's back will yield very little, but a bad one cannot bear it at all. Cassa, the man who had charge of our transport arrangements, helped me greatly in buying the donkeys. The very minute I bought one and paid for it I marked it by clipping a square patch on its rump with a pair of nail scissors : this was quite enough for all present purposes. The great difficulty was to make the natives bring the pads and straps, as without them of course the donkeys were perfectly useless. We here employed some servants in making sandals for themselves out of cow-skin that I had bought at Deeveroua ; in fact, most of them asked me to allow them to make some, as the paths through the jungle are very thorny and stony, and not like travelling through the cultivated fields of Tigré. Plowden Gubrihote, H.'s gun-bearer, was shoe—or rather sandal—maker to the rest ; he had

been, when a little boy, servant to Consul Plowden, who was murdered in South Abyssinia, and he was a capital servant, but rather cowardly.

In the evening Barrakee, the young chief's tutor, proposed that we should go up to the top of a high-peaked hill close by, and see the country we were approaching. We rode up some distance, and at last had to get off our mules as the way became very steep. Certainly a more glorious view I never saw. To the north-west we could see the plains through which the Mareb runs, and to the south-west were the mountains among whose gorges that splendid river the Tackazzee flows ; beyond the Tackazzee to the west, in fact in front of us, might be seen two mountains, one of which is of a very peculiar shape—these mark the province of Walkait. On the top of one of these mountains is a fort or stronghold which cannot be reached except by ropes—no human being can climb up to it. Due south of where we were standing lay crowded together that mass of mountains called the Siemien range, the tops of which, the natives informed us, were covered with snow the whole year round. This I cannot vouch for, as I certainly did not see any at that time ; and I almost think, if there had been snow, it would have caught the rays of the setting sun, and it could have been seen quite distinctly. The Tackazzee rises in

the Siemien from springs ; at least, this I think and believe is the case, on the authority of an old servant we had with us, called Hadji Mahomet, who came from that part of the world. As we looked below us we could see the inmates of some huts that were clustered round the mountain engaged in celebrating a marriage. All the company were assembled in a large "das," or leafy bower, drinking and dancing, and every now and then a shot would be fired off in the air in celebration of the auspicious event. As I looked towards the distant view which lay before us I little thought that on my return journey I should be as anxious to get home as I was then to explore those regions. We waited till the sun set behind the mountains of Walkait, and then came down the hill and made for camp.

H. and I very much wished, before leaving the country, to try and get some black leopard skin, and some of the silver-mounted shields which are made at Adowa, and which are carried by the great chiefs of the country. K. said that if we wrote out an order and sent it to Adowa it would be attended to. I wrote out a couple of orders, one for the black leopard skins and the other for the shields, and we both signed them and got John to transcribe them into Amharic. While I was writing them he remarked that English writing was very quick and very

different from writing Amharic, in which every letter has to be formed separately, in the same way as when we "print" with a pen in English.

Whenever we were in camp for two or three days in one place it was invariably the custom of the natives to bring their sick to be healed by the white men, or else to beg for medicines. They even on one occasion brought a cripple, carried in a sort of frame: I suppose they expected me to perform a miracle. On the present occasion a man came into camp with a large sore, about the size of the palm of one's hand, on his shin; he had evidently had it for some time, and the wound was covered with cow-dung, for what reason I do not know. I told him to go away and wash his leg and come back to me with it clean. I then consulted with Brou what was best to be done in the case. I had no caustic with me, so I determined to cauterize it with boiling grease. We had saved some fat from the cow we had killed; I took a portion of this, put it into a pan on the fire to boil, and I informed the man what I was going to do, and that it would hurt him a great deal, but that if he liked to let it be done he might. He said, "Do what you like; I do not care." The grease was very soon melted and bubbling; I took it off the fire and was going to apply it, when the servants, who were looking on with interest, thought it was too hot, and that I should

hurt the man too much, so I let it get cold a little and poured it on to his leg. He did not seem to feel it, nor did he wince at all ; so I said that would not do, and that next time I should give it him boiling hot. I put the pan on the fire again, and when next I poured the grease on, it fizzed and crackled in the same way that bacon does ; but the most curious part of the operation was that the man, who a person would have supposed would have almost fainted with pain, only winced, much in the same way as people may be seen to do when they have had a tooth drawn.

It is difficult to explain this ; but it is the case, that all the black races will endure many surgical operations of the roughest sort, but directly strong medicine is given them it seems to kill them at once. I made the man pour a little milk over the wound, gave him five rhubarb pills to take, and told him to go and lie down in the shade. I did not hear afterwards that he had died, so I think he must have recovered. I may as well tell the reader that I had a most excellent medicine-chest with me, and was very well provided with almost everything that was necessary. These are the different descriptions of drugs the chest contained :—A good quantity of quinine in two-grain pills, rhubarb pills, chlorodyne, a sedative solution of opium for diarrhœa, Warburg's fever tinc-

ture, spermaceti ointment, lint bandages, scissors, needles and silk for sewing up cuts, &c. But, notwithstanding all this provision of remedies I managed to get most terribly ill ; indeed one might have a whole chemist's shop in one's possession, but, without proper food and comforts, all would be of little use.

Barrakee, who I believe was somewhat of a musician, was very anxious to hear me play on the banjo I had with me, so I got it and began playing : he and the young chief listened for some time, and then remarked that it was very like Shangalla music. The Shangalla, or Baria, are the nearest tribe of negroes to Abyssinia. Barrakee then sent for a sort of Abyssinian guitar, on which he commenced making a monotonous noise, and thus ended this rather eventful day.

Fcb. 2.—All to-day I was engaged in quarrelling over the prices of different donkeys which were brought in. In the morning H. successfully stalked a flock of pigeons that had settled on the ploughed ground close by, and managed to bag five of them with two barrels. All game is very acceptable, as it always makes an addition and variation to what provisions are in hand. We calculated that we should have to buy twenty donkeys ; we had very nearly succeeded in getting that number, but two more were wanted to complete the set, and these could not be got either

for love or money. At last a priest appeared who was with great difficulty persuaded to lend us his two donkeys until we could manage to buy from the neighbouring villages two for ourselves.

This afternoon I thought I would show the young chief the use of the sword which I had bought in the market at Semmemar, and so, asking him to let me look at his own, I showed him the common one I had purchased, at which he seemed rather to sneer. We had got the best part of a goat in camp, and I hung up the hind quarters, with part of the back attached, on to a rope stretched between the two "dasses" which had been built for us. The sword was very sharp, and I managed to cut this piece of the carcass right in half. I then asked him if he would do the same, but he said he could not. I rather suspect he would not, as he was very proud of his sword, and probably thought that cutting a goat in half would not be a deed worthy of such a weapon. I then cut off another piece for his edification, and also to try to induce him to show off, which, however, he refused to do, and eventually retired to his followers and Barakee, no doubt to talk over what the Feringee had done, and wonder why he had done it, and what was the use of the feat.

He came to me again in the evening—this was another instance of native imagination of the power

of the white men to heal and cure—and informed me, in a mysterious tone, that his mother had been mad for some years, and he wanted some medicine to cure her. I with great difficulty explained to him, through the interpreter, that it was impossible for us to cure madness, and that in our country we had asylums, or houses for mad people, set apart. I said that anything I could do to alleviate suffering I should be most happy to attempt. He seemed a nice young fellow, for in the evening he brought us some thick cakes made of maize, which he said his mother had sent us. These were very good and excellent eating, as we had been living on “damper” and Peek and Frean’s biscuits, which are very dry.

CHAPTER VIII.

DONKEY ROBBERIES—REPRISALS—A FRIEND IN NEED—POSTMEN—
APOLOGIES—A THIEF SURPRISED—IN SEARCH OF A MILLER—THE
WAY TO GET WATER—A SWIM—ARRIVAL OF MY RIFLE—CUSTOM-
HOUSE—ELEPHANT-HUNTING—HINTS ON COSTUME—FIRESIDE
TALES—HOW TO PRODUCE FIRE—AN EPICURE—HARTEBEEST AND
GIRAFFES—JUNGLE FIRES.

Feb. 3.—I find I began my rough journal to-day with these words: "At last we leave this beastly place, where all has been quarrelling and bargaining." I certainly was heartily sick of it, and glad to get away, and so I think were most of us. To make matters worse, before we started, the servants came and told us that four of our donkeys were missing, two that the priest had lent us and two that we had bought. At this we were furious. H. and I both agreed that we would not stand this sort of nonsense, and we went to K. and told him that we thought it was disgraceful conduct on the part of the chief, and vowed vengeance on the old sinner. K. tried to pacify us, and said the donkeys would turn up in time.

Certainly, to say the least of it, it was very annoying, especially on the point of departure. We called our servants together and went up to the ballaga's house where the donkeys had been put for the night. The young chief evidently thought we had hostile intentions, as his followers might be seen running in front of him taking the sheaths off the points of their long spears. When we got to the house we took up our position just outside the low wall which surrounded it.

The young chief was close to a house not many yards off. I sent word to say that, if the donkeys were not immediately forthcoming, we should burn down the man's house and take what goods and chattels he had there. I went in and took a large jar of honey and an enormous pumpkin as a sort of security till the donkeys came. At length the two donkeys we had bought turned up. We then demanded the other two which the priest had lent us. The Abyssinians said, "They are not paid for;" to which we replied that he would not sell them to us, but that he promised to lend them, and that, if they would not give them up, we should do what we had threatened.

Before going on I may say that we had letters to send to the post, and it was important they should start that day, so as to catch the steamer

which runs every three weeks. As we were now at loggerheads with the chief, it would have been difficult to get him to give us a messenger for so long a journey ; but Brou helped me out of this difficulty. He had a friend among some Mahomedans who lived not far off, and he told me that if I gave him the letters they would be given to the head-man of the Mahomedan village, and that he would insure their being sent to the coast. Brou made all the arrangements, and I did not, as usual, see the messenger myself and make him swear that he would carry the letters safely. It eventually transpired that they reached their destination all right ; and in fact we found, all through our journey, that the Mahomedans were a great deal easier to deal with in business, bargaining, and arrangements, than the Abyssinians.

I went down into our camp to get the letters and send them off by Brou, and when I came back I found K. and H. were rather bored with sitting there and waiting. K. had been inclined to take the Abyssinians' part ; he said it was one of the usual events of travelling in such a country, and we should not make a great fuss ; this annoyed us still more. At last the donkeys were brought and all was made right. I returned the jar of honey that I had taken from the house, and I was going to return the pumpkin, but K. said, "I think we had better

keep this," a remark that amused us very much, as he had previously been all for the Abyssinians, and now he was quite ready to take the native's pumpkin. These pumpkins make a very good dish, boiled in water with a little sugar. It is wonderful on occasions of this sort how "cute" one gets at foraging for food. To-day was the only time, during our whole journey, that I saw a snake. I just caught a glimpse of the reptile as he wriggled away among some corn sheaves; he was yellow, and almost of the colour of the corn.

In consequence of the "row" about the donkeys, we could not start until next day. The old chief, Adik, came to say good-bye to us. He had never, all through the time of our stay at Adiaboo, been half so civil as the younger native, and the servants felt unanimously that it was owing to him that the donkeys had been taken; so I intimated that I would not say good-bye or take any notice of him unless he apologised for all the trouble he had given us. I had put it very strongly to his relative, the young man, and told him, in so many words, I did not think he had behaved as an Abyssinian chief ought to behave to Englishmen, when they came to pay a visit to his country. He said at first that he would not apologise, but at length, towards the evening, he came up and said he was very sorry for what had happened, and he hoped we should have a pleasant journey and lots of sport.

Feb. '4.—This morning we really did make a start, although we had great difficulty in getting away, as we had fresh servants to look after the donkeys, the new men did not know the nature of the packages, and every donkey-load had to be made out separately by Cassa. We did not go very far this march, but camped near a little village called Adikai. The people were very civil, and directly the young chief, who was with us, told them to put up a "das," they did so at once. The only little event which rather disturbed the harmony of the scene was one of the natives attempting to snatch away one of our mechanias. I happened to see this, and, running up to him, gave him a push that sent him clean head over heels, and I told him to let our things alone; the people who were looking on all said that it served him perfectly right.

There was a wedding going on at this village—in fact, I believe this was the time of year during which most of the weddings in Abyssinia take place—and the arkees, or groomsmen, who during the week the wedding is held go about the villages stealing what they can lay hands on in order to give to the bridegroom, came and danced before us. It was the same sort of dance that our coolies had entertained us with on the Mareb: one stepped forward and went through various contortions, and then, at one part of the

dance, they all sat down and clapped their hands, making a hissing noise. The young chief said if we would give them a dollar they would be very pleased ; so we presented them with one, and they went away delighted. We had bought a quantity of corn at Adiaboo for food for our servants in the jungle, but we could not manage to get it ground at Adiaboo ; the young chief, however, said we should be able to do so in the villages as we went on. He came to us in the middle of the day and said, " I cannot make the ballagas grind your corn ; you must go through the villages and make them give you an equal weight of flour in exchange for your corn." The reason why he could not make the ballagas of the nearest village grind the corn was that the village belonged to the Monastery of Debra Bizen, which my readers will remember was situated on a high mountain that overlooked the little valley of Gindar. The priest of the village said that the young chief had no power over these people, who paid tribute to the monastery. We went into the village and said that we must have some flour, and that we had brought corn to exchange for it. We sent our servants round to the different houses to fetch the flour, while a priest, a nice-looking old fellow in a green turban, looked on to see that we did not take more than was right. From one of the little hamlets, to which I went to look for some

flour, all the inhabitants ran away, and clustered on a hill close by, looking at Brou and myself, who had walked up to the houses. We ascertained the folks had just been at their meals, and Brou, who declared that he had eaten no breakfast that morning, sat down and demolished the remaining victuals which he found in the hut. We took what flour we wanted and left corn in exchange. One of the servants who accompanied me to carry the corn, wanted as usual to steal something, but I said I would not allow that, and he must leave the things just as he found them.

As we came back with the flour that we had exchanged for corn we met the arkees, and Brou said to them, "Do not go up to those houses and steal the things while the people are away, and then say that we did it!" This was quite right, as these gentlemen were hanging about, and they would most likely have made a clean sweep of everything they had found, and then have said that the Feringee had taken them. Let me recommend to travellers, when camping near a native village, to watch for a long string of women, who generally bring up the water from the nearest stream. Usually your servants have plenty to do without going to fetch water: the best way is to take the water from the women, empty it into your own vessels, and let them go back and get more for themselves. This we did with great success at

Adikai, and none of our men had to go and draw any water at all. Some trifling present soon put the women in the best of tempers, but I really do not think they minded the water being taken from them, only they were terribly afraid lest their jars should be broken. Most of them, when robbed, began laughing and chaffing our servants.

The next day we went on to the village of Azho, and camped in the dry bed of a stream, in a field where the Dargousa corn had just been cut. Our camp was below a high plateau on which this large village was built. It is the frontier village, and after this you meet no more habitations till you come to the province of Walkait, which would be from this point about eight days' travelling on a mule. I had gone on in front to fix the camp, and found some of our donkeys, which we had sent on early in the morning, waiting for us there; by-and-by the whole caravan came up, after which we enjoyed a very pleasant swim in a little pool in the river. This is a luxury which anybody travelling in a hot country will thoroughly appreciate, as it is impossible to take a bath with you while travelling in this sort of way; and we had to do most of our washing in a *chillumchee*.* The young chief and some of his followers came and begged some powder and bullets: we gave them some

* *Chillumchee* is an Indian word for a flat-bottomed tin basin.

bullets but very little powder ; as it is always dangerous to give natives powder when they are likely to be with you, because they might turn your enemies, and it would be adding insult to injury to be shot with your own ammunition.

The messenger who had brought our letters from home to Adiaboo informed us that he had passed some men on the road who, he believed, were bringing some guns and ammunition to us. Here at length was some news of my long-looked-for Express rifle, and also my heavy rifle. I had intrusted the carriage of the gun for us to the missionaries who live at Ailet, and Mr. Lager, the head missionary, said he would arrange that everything should be forwarded just as it was passed into his hands from the authorities at Massowah. Sure enough, about noon the next day, when we were lounging about camp and doing nothing—in fact, waiting for the guns—I heard a shot on the other side of the river, and very soon a short little Abyssinian appeared, dressed in European costume, followed by some natives carrying a box and also some other cases. I was very much amused at his firing the shot, as he strutted into camp with an air of great importance, and feeling, no doubt, that he had accomplished a great task. The shot was to give notice of his presence as he came along. I never was more pleased in my life ; the guns had

arrived just at the right moment, and all were uninjured and in as good order as when they had left the gun-maker's shop in St. James's Street. The little fellow who had brought them all this long way was an Abyssinian that the missionaries had reared and educated. He said he had had great difficulty in getting along, and one of the coolies, having fallen sick, had stayed at a village on the road. The first thing we did was to give them plenty to eat and drink, such as we had ; we then squared accounts with them, and they were to go back home the next day. Most of this day was spent in unpacking the ammunition and guns ; they seemed to be all right. Tomorrow we were to start for the Tackazzee, and to leave all traces of civilisation, of any sort, behind us ; while we were in the highest possible spirits and our prospects were of the brightest.

That evening I walked out and went up to the village of Azho to see what it was like : on my way there I "put up" some quail, but I did not fire at them. Azho is a large straggling village built on a high plateau, without any shade in or near it. Some of the natives showed me the way up a steep hill, where I had another view of the country we were going to, and I came back when it was quite dark, having seen a most beautiful sunset over the hills. H. thought I was lost, and was very nearly sending out to look

for me. The country we had been travelling through from Adiaboo to Azho was very lovely, and the sides of the low undulating hills were highly cultivated. I have no doubt, in the valleys, the natives reaped a rich harvest. The village of Azho itself was a good specimen of Abyssinian dwellings; the people seemed well-to-do, and the houses carefully and neatly built. There was a custom-house here, where cotton from Walkait and other distant provinces paid tribute. Before I go on, I must say that the transport of my guns from the village of Ailet to where we were at Azho cost 46 dollars, and the coolies considered themselves well paid.

Feb. 6.—I started off, before H., with a guide to show me the way, but we chanced, somehow or other, to lose our road, and I was greatly annoyed. This march I did on foot, as my grey mule, which had a very sore back, had to be left behind at Adiaboo. K. procured me another, but it was a sorry brute, and always kicked when being mounted, so I got rid of it. After wandering about some little time in the jungle, trying to find our way, we at length hit upon the path, and saw some of our own donkeys, under the care of Hadji Mahomet, travelling along. We were to camp at a place called Maidarou, the usual camping-place on this road for all caravans. There were two very large trees close to the pools which supplied us

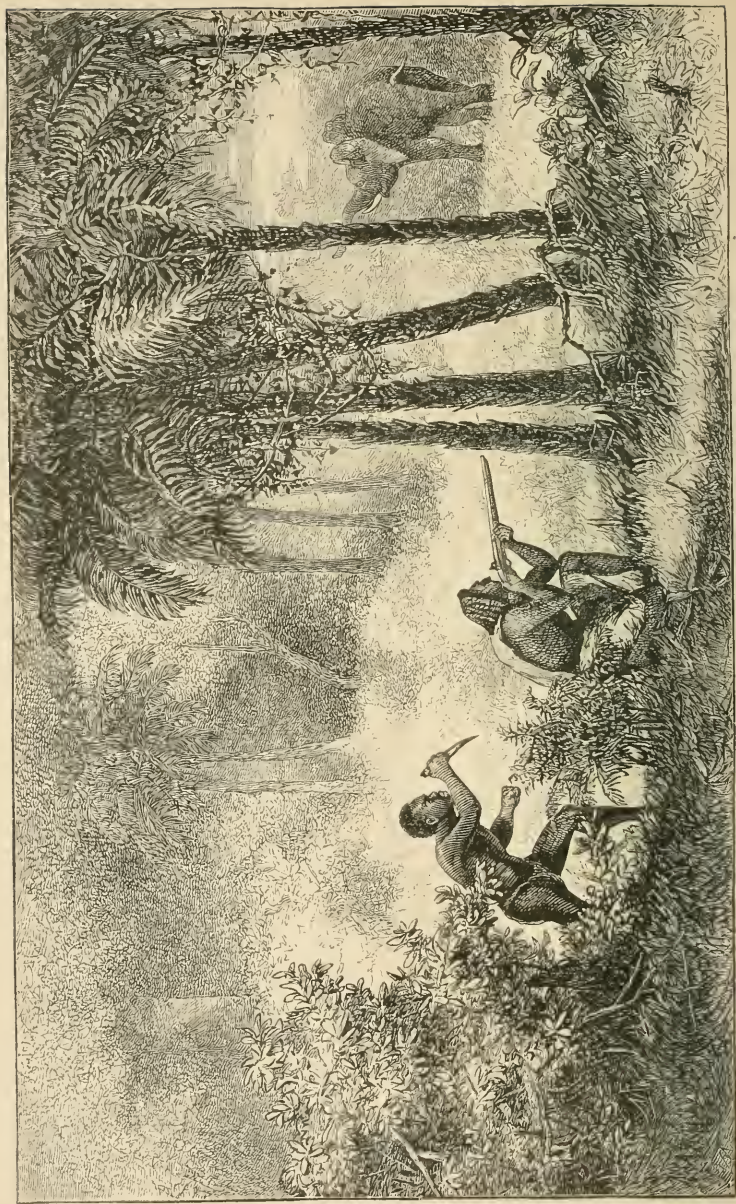
with water, and we were very glad of their shade after the march of the day. For myself, I was rather tired, and was not in very good working condition, having through most of our marching been riding a mule. After having lunched we pitched our tents on the flat top of a little rocky hill which just overlooked the two large trees that formed the great feature in this camping-place. On my road here I shot at a gazelle, but, unluckily, the man who was carrying my Express rifle was some distance behind, and so I could only fire at it with my little 16-bore gun with a bullet. The next day we were to come to a place called Coom-Coom-Dema.

This is the head-quarters of those Abyssinians who come down to hunt elephants, for the young Abyssinians, that is to say the gentlemen of the country, think it part of their education to come here to shoot elephants. There are regular ivory hunters, who live at Azho and the villages near, and these go down to assist. The young Abyssinians who seek to distinguish themselves shoot at the elephant with small shot or slugs, just enough to draw blood, and then it is left to the Neftenias, or hunters, to finish him off with bullets. Their mode of hunting is rather curious. When they see the elephant, of course they stalk him with great care: two lines are made; the first line, on coming up to the elephant, fire and take to their heels

as quickly as possible. If the elephant is wounded, he very often charges, and then meets the second line, who receive him with a greater number of shots ; they then follow him up, if badly wounded, and despatch him at their leisure. The Abyssinians are, as a rule, bad sportsmen, and seem to me to be totally unacquainted with the commonest rules of wood-craft. I would recommend all sportsmen who hunt in a wild country to adapt their dress as much as possible to the colour of the landscape in which they find themselves. I always shot in brown cord breeches and flax gaiters, with a good *cumberbund** round my waist, and a short-tailed coat, which was made of strong cotton stuff that I bought in India.

All the servants with us, as well as the followers of the young chief, were in a tremendous fright because of the Baria, the negro tribe of which I spoke before, and who came up to this part of the country to hunt the elephant, and also to kill whatever Abyssinians they could find. I myself never saw one of these redoubtable natives, nor do I believe they would attempt to attack a well-armed party ; but in the evening, over the camp fire, many terrible stories were told of how So-and-so was murdered, and how

* *Cumberbund* is an Indian word for a thick scarf which is wound round and round the waist ; it is a great preventive against sun-stroke and chills.



A WILY BAKIA.

cunning and treacherous the Baria were. Brou, the interpreter, was not behindhand in telling us all sorts of terrible things about them. One story he told us was this: There was a man who lived in a village close to the frontier, and who had to pay tribute to the chief of his province in ivory. He had gone down to the desert, or jungle, to hunt the elephant alone; a wily Baria following him most of the time. It should be stated that this tribe of natives have no fire-arms, and only hunt and destroy with spears and knives. The elephant-hunter was stalking an elephant, and had come up to him; at the moment he fired, the Baria, who had been sneaking after him, jumped up from behind, drove his knife into him, and killed him. This is a good example of their treachery; but the Abyssinians are just as much to blame in regard to the Baria or Shangallas, for whenever the Abyssinians catch them in much smaller numbers than themselves they generally kill them.

Feb. 7.—H. went on in front to Coom-Coom-Dema: I said that as it was early I should shoot over part of the country and join him later. I went away into the jungle, which lay south of our camp, and came upon some old elephant tracks. I had not gone very much farther before I saw some gazelles; I managed to get near one of them, and, as it was racing away on the side of a little hill, I rolled it over

with my Express. My gun-bearers very soon skinned it, and they having succeeded in lighting a fire, I said they might eat some of it. The way an Abyssinian hunter makes a fire in the jungle is this : he takes some of his powder and rubs it on a bit of cotton cloth which he tears off the clothes he is wearing, and then wraps up a percussion cap in the cloth and hammers the cap between two stones till it explodes ; this ignites the dry cloth, and with the help of some twigs and grass, and by blowing very hard on the smouldering cotton, he manages to light a fire. It is wonderful how natives under the most trying circumstances will kindle a flame where no European would think such a thing possible.

My gun-bearers were soon roasting the hind-quarters of the gazelle on the ashes, and also eating some parts of it raw. I was sitting down under the shade of a tree, and heard Goubasee behind me munching something ; I turned round, and was much disgusted at seeing him eating the stomach of a gazelle, which was not in the least washed, and in fact was a filthy sight. This is considered a great delicacy by Abyssinians, especially when the stomach is covered with the green undigested food of the animal. After we had all rested, and they had eaten sufficient, we tracked back on our old path, and soon struck the regular caravan road. I thought it would have been a long

walk, but, to my astonishment, the hills opened and I saw in front of me a large plain—this was the plain of Coom-Coom-Dema. H. had pitched the tents, and everything was ready and comfortable. Just after we had lunched, one of the servants said that he could see on the plain some large deer, which he called *tora*; they were in reality hartebeest. They were going down to drink from the pool where we got our water, but directly they saw us they trotted off. Some gazelles got up as we were walking along, and I fired and missed, so did H. There were tracks of buffalo all about our camp, but they were very old, having been made during the rains. Barrakee, who had undertaken the sporting arrangements of the party, said this was a very good place for game, but we determined not to stop here, but to press on to the Tackazzee, the goal of my ambition.

Feb. 8.—This morning we were almost awakened by the noise the little sand-grouse made in circling round and round our tents. I got up and brought down two brace of them, as they wheeled round attempting to settle on some ground close to our camp. It was rather pretty shooting, as the birds came very fast, and I only wished that I could have had some more of it, but the rest of the pack soon got frightened and went away. After this we packed up our traps and left Coom-Coom-Dema. On the road, Barrakee, who was

riding a large white horse, pointed me out a herd of giraffes about half a mile off. I attempted to stalk them, but did not succeed in getting near them. They went off at a slight ambling pace, and when once they had crossed the little hill, on the near side of which they were feeding, I could not see them again. Fisk had come with me, and we were both very anxious to kill something. I shot at some sort of deer, but missed, and on my way back saw a gazelle, at which I did not fire.

When I came back to the road, completely parched with thirst, as it was very hot, I found that all our donkeys had stopped : this was very vexing, as my great object was to get on now as quickly as possible. Brou said the donkeys were very heavily loaded, that the day was hot, and that there was no prospect of getting water between where we were and the Tackazzee. This was simply untrue ; for when I found Barrakee and talked to him upon the subject, it turned out that there was water farther on ; so I immediately made them reload the donkeys and push on. Barrakee fixed our camp by the edge of a dry river-bed, in which there was left a large pool of water, and there were tracks of elephants having drunk here some time previously. We cleared the high grass from the jungle and pitched our tents, after which H. went out shooting, but did not get anything. When

it was dark we saw jungle fires in the distance, which our servants all said had been kindled by the Baria to burn us out. This, of course, was all humbug, or they had nothing better to talk about. The place we camped at was called Kourasa, or the house of the long-tailed monkey, and this water-hole which we were camped by, Barrakee told us, is a regular drinking-place for elephants ; he added, with much mystery and fear, that perhaps they might come in the night and trample on our camp. I only hoped they would ! The natives assured me that we should find the Tackazzee next day ; and, accordingly, in the morning we started, H. having gone on in front with the young chief.

CHAPTER IX.

THE FOREST—THE TACKAZZEE AT LAST—A FORD—AN UNHEALTHY CAMP—HIPPOPOTAMI—A RAFT—ON THE ELEPHANT TRACK—IN SIGHT OF GAME—A LION AND A MESS—BIVOUACKING—BEGINNING OF MY ILLNESS—GUINEA FOWL—WE TURN HOMEWARDS—"THE BLUES"—RAFT-BUILDING—A CARAVAN—ELEPHANT AGAIN—A BIG FISH!—NEWSPAPERS—CHANGE OF QUARTERS—THE GAME OF "GALANIFT."

Feb. 9.—To-day I was to take charge of the heavy baggage and donkeys; this we generally took it in turns to do. I caught H. up at a river, where I found them all drinking. He went on directly, and I stopped for an hour to rest our twenty-one donkeys and their drivers, and to let them have something to drink. The country we were travelling through had changed; we were at a much lower level than we had been before, and dome-palms grew in every direction, the shorter and younger ones of which made a thick jungle which we pushed our way through, the leaves causing a great rattling as we went on. This was much more my idea of an African forest than anything I had ever seen before. I saw a hagazin on the

side of a hill near me, and tried to stalk it. I got so close to the animal that I could hear him making a peculiar grunting noise close to me, but for the life of me, in the thick jungle, I could not make out where he was. I moved on a little farther, and then I saw him trotting away in the distance. Elephant tracks were to be seen in all directions crossing the main path along which we travelled, and fresh elephant dung was here in quantities.

I travelled on through the forest and came upon the party of the young chief, who was waiting for me by some water, H. having come across elephants and gone after them. I asked the little chief why he had not gone with him to hunt elephants; he said, in the most polite way, that he was staying behind to wait for me. I thanked him, and determined to push on again and make the Tackazzee that day. Mahomet, one of the coolies, or rather donkey-drivers, that we had brought with us from Adiaboo, volunteered to act as guide. I pushed on as quickly as possible, and, about half-past four in the afternoon, the servants pointed out the Tackazzee. There, sure enough, was a broad river below me, running between high rocky hills, with its waters gleaming in the setting sun. I was standing several hundred feet above it, and on the left of me, on the same side on which I was, was a green jungle of grass and tama-

risk bushes fringing the bank of the river. A large herd of hagazin had just been drinking, and they were moving quietly away, the males leading and the hinds following with the little fawns trotting at their feet. The whole scene was really a beautiful one, and I stopped for some little time to admire the view which lay before me. The natives had pointed out the antelope to me, but I was too excited to take any notice, so I gave them a view-halloo, and told the guide to lead me to the bottom of the hill where the river ran. When we got down into the green jungle which fringed the bank of the river it was so high we could not see over it, and pushing on through it, we soon found ourselves on the shingly bed of the river. The water was beautifully clear, and I gladly drank a draught of it. We then forded the river with some of the more lightly-laden donkeys, which had managed to keep up and follow me. Goubasee, on his arrival at the other side, held up his hands and exclaimed, "God has brought us safely here!" I was so pleased to see a large river again that I took off my boots and paddled about in the water, for almost the last fresh-water stream of a good size I had seen was the one on which the Citizen penny steamers glide.

We had brought down two cows from Adiaboo with us, and these animals were very nearly swept away by

the stream, where they would have been devoured by crocodiles. The man who had charge of them lost his head, and became very nearly as frightened as were the beasts themselves; at last some of the servants rushed into the water, got below the cows, and drove them back to the bank they started from. They then attempted again, and crossed in safety. I fixed the camp amidst a large grove of dome-palms; a prettier place could not well be imagined. The ground was perfectly flat; in fact, as if it had been thoroughly stamped down. There was a beautiful shade of a large leafy tree close by, but unluckily, as is often the case in Eastern climes, where the scene is of the loveliest the place is most unwholesome; and, as proved afterwards, most of us, myself included, fell ill, which I believe was a great deal owing to our not having fixed our camp on one of the high hills that overlooked the river, instead of down in the river-bed. *Experientia docet*, and, as my readers will see afterwards, I paid dearly for what little experience I gained in rough travel in this country.

I heard, in a pool below the ford where we had crossed, some animals making an unusual noise, grunting and blowing. I went down with my gun-bearers to the edge of the river, and, behold! there were eight fine hippopotami disporting themselves in the river, much in the same way as the old river-horse at the

Zoo may be seen swimming about his tank. They reared themselves out of the water and exposed their heads and part of their necks, sometimes opening their enormous jaws so that I could see their white tusks. I fired at the nearest of the herd, and hit him behind the ear. He began bleeding profusely, and waltzed round and round in the water, causing tremendous waves. At last in about half an hour he sank, and we saw him no more. I shot at several more and, I believe, killed another, but we saw no traces of them again; and I think it is a great chance, in a large rapid river of this sort, if their carcasses are found at all. I sent servants during the following days up and down the river, but they were quite unsuccessful in finding any trace of the beasts. H. did not come in till late, having gone after an elephant he had wounded. He told me they had found large clots of blood on the animal's track, but that he had to give up as they were getting far away from our line of march and from any water-pools. Cassa arrived very late with the rest of the donkeys. He assured us that one of the Baria had fired the jungle in a circle, and so had tried to surround him and some of the more heavily-laden donkeys which had lagged behind. This was quite believed by all our servants, and it made a great impression on some of them.

Feb. 10.—To-day we rested most of the morning. In the afternoon I went down to the pool where the hippopotami were, but they had got much more shy, and showed only just the tops of their heads and their wicked-looking little ears above water. As one opened his jaws I hit him smack in the mouth; this sounded just as if a bullet had gone into a stack of faggots. He sank immediately, and I could not in the least tell whether I had killed him or not. As these hippopotami had got so shy, I commenced to-day, with the help of Brou, to make a raft on which to try and go down the river to them. Some of the dome-palms had fallen down from old age and from the effects of the floods that sweep by during the rainy season; I proposed to lash these together with raw hide, but I had nothing except a hand-saw to cut the logs the proper length, and the palm wood was very hard and the weather very hot.

Feb. 11.—We had arranged with Barrakee to go for three days and sleep out, or bivouac, and hunt elephants; we accordingly started straight inland towards the mountains of Walkait. After we had crossed the hills, under which the Tackazzee ran, we came upon a sort of open plain with little hills cropping up here and there, and we had been following fresh elephant tracks the whole time. I must not forget to mention that during the night a large herd of

elephants had passed close to our camp, and that all the jungle round was trampled and broken in every direction. I just remember, in a half-sleepy state, hearing strange noises, but I thought at the time that it was only the "hippos" disporting themselves in the pool below. At last Barrakee, who was going in front, said that we were getting very close to the elephants, and that we must leave our mules behind us, and follow them up the rest of the way on foot. Not long afterwards we saw two elephants in the distance moving slowly along. We tried to stalk them, but we did not succeed. Barrakee took us to some water, where we drank, and close by which, as we came up to it, were some pigs lying asleep under a tree. An Abyssinian tried to knock one over with the butt of his gun, for we did not like to fire, being so close to the elephants.

After we had halted for a little time and rested ourselves, Barrakee said we should move on, and he took us to the top of a steep little hill, where he said we were to pass the night, and from whence we could see the whole country round us. Brou, and a couple of men that Barrakee had with him, built us a "das." We ate some luncheon, and then we sat down to watch for any elephant that might perchance be about. We had thus waited for about an hour when Barrakee leaped up and said he saw two elephants in the distance, so we got

our guns and went off to stalk them. The elephants were walking towards the south, following the main body of the herd which had passed very early in the morning. Our object was to cut them off on their way, and Barrakee led us sometimes over the low hills, and sometimes round the sides of them, and we gradually approached nearer the two elephants, who were moving along swinging their trunks about, and sometimes stopping to pick off a bit of a shrub which looked more dainty than the rest. At last there was only one little hill for us to go over, and to cross it would bring us right across the path of the two elephants. We were creeping along very quietly when, as we came to a few rocks, where, in the rainy season, a torrent evidently poured down, Barrakee stopped suddenly and said, "Ambasa!" which is Amharic for lion. I snatched hold of my Express, rushed up and saw a fine male lion moving slowly away among the rocks. At the moment I was going to fire, H. came up and fired his heavy rifle close behind me ; both barrels went off at once, and I thought at first I was shot, as nine drams of powder is rather a large charge to be let off close to one's ear. I missed the lion ; so did H. I loaded again and ran after him and fired, and missed. The elephants, which were not more than forty or fifty yards off, went off in another direction, and the lion, passing through some

trees, "put up" a herd of large deer which went also in a different direction. It was a sight grand enough, but we had made a terrible mess of the whole thing : we ought not to have fired at the lion, and, as the servants said, "If you had killed the elephants, plenty of lions would have come to pick the bones." I may tell my readers that the lions in Abyssinia are not like the familiar picture that is everywhere to be seen of animals with enormous manes, as the species in this country have no mane at all. We then walked back to the little hill whereon we were to camp that night, all of us disappointed and crestfallen. The whole of the top of this hill was covered with the most beautiful sweet-smelling grass, and of this we gathered a large quantity to make our beds. I had arranged with one of our servants to bring out my little camp bed and blankets, but, as we went away from camp rather quickly, following up the tracks of the elephant, the native lost his way, and I had nothing to cover me but some sacking, which the medicine case was wrapped up in. That night we slept very comfortably and warmly, as the grass made a capital bed.

Feb. 12.—This day we moved away on the track of the herd of elephants. The jungle became denser, and Barrakee halted us by a beautiful stream of water, and pointed out a hill close by, where he said we should camp that night. A little river that

we were near was full of small fish, and I amused myself by trying to catch some of them by damming up a part of the river, but I did not succeed. After luncheon I went up the stream, and found Barrakee and H. seated on a rock engaged in trying to catch some fish; one of them with a crooked pin, and the other with the only hook we had in camp. Amongst us we managed to lift three out of the water; these I cleaned and brought them back into camp for dinner. After catching the fish we took a most delicious swim in the pool. That night, unluckily for me, there was no grass to be found, and I borrowed a blanket from Brou, but, foolishly, instead of covering myself up with it, I rolled it up and used it as a pillow. I caught a chill in the night, and in consequence, found myself suffering from severe diarrhœa in the morning. From this day date all my troubles, illness, and misfortunes. It certainly was very unfortunate, as we had only just got into the country where the game was really to be found.

This only shows how particularly careful one ought to be when leading a life of this sort, and especially when sleeping out in the open air. A good thick flannel belt should always be worn next the skin. What I really believe gave me this chill was that I took off the cumberbund, which had been wound tightly round my waist, in order to sleep more com-

fortably. This proceeding was a terrible mistake, as it is in the night time and the early dawn that these chills are acquired, which prove at all times most deadly, especially in a hot climate.

On the whole, I should consider Abyssinia to be a very healthy country. The only two complaints which Europeans seem to suffer from are intermittent fevers—which are not, as a rule, of a very dangerous nature—and dysentery, which, of course, if proper remedies and suitable food are at hand, is not serious, but under other circumstances may prove very dangerous. Let me urge upon all travellers who go to seek adventure and sport in Africa to remember to keep their heads well protected from the sun, and their loins well girded with either a thick cumerbund, worn outside, or, better still, a flannel belt worn next the skin. Every one will notice that the natives are dressed in this way, especially the Arabs who live at Massowah, where the climate is very hot. It would be useless for me to go into the different diseases the natives of the country are subject to. There is one which I have already mentioned, that is the *tænia*, or tapeworm. They are also subject to intermittent fevers during the rains, and suffer from a complaint caused by a parasite called the Guinea worm, which is a worm that forms in the flesh, very often the thigh, and has to be gradually twisted out. If during the operation the

worm breaks, a horrible ulcer forms. As to scrofula and its origin, I saw very little of it, the natives seeming, on the whole, pretty free from this terrible scourge. When a person among them is afflicted with very bad rheumatism they have rather an original way of effecting a cure, which is by putting bits of cotton on the parts affected, and igniting them, making them burn fiercely by blowing upon the cotton. This is even sometimes done for the purpose of creating beauty marks, as they are considered—a young man showing his fortitude by allowing one of the fair sex to light one of these bits of cotton, and blow on it to create as much heat as possible. If by any chance he flinches, or shows any indication of pain, he is thought to be a coward, and not worthy of the lady's notice. Concerning this mode of curing rheumatism, I believe there is some similar custom among country people in England, the *modus operandi* being a heated flat iron with which the affected limb is treated.

Feb. 13.—I rode out this morning on my mule through a green, thorny jungle which lay opposite the hill on which we were camped. I was on the look-out for big game, and so did not fire at a large flock of guinea-fowl which I put up: there must have been at least two or three hundred of them, and they all rose at once, making a tremendous row. It was a very pretty sight, and one quite peculiar to the coun-

try which I was in. I felt very seedy, and disinclined to do anything; and so having gone straight through this patch of jungle I came to the little stream again, where I sat down by a pool, and waited there for most of the day, in hopes of some animal coming down to drink. Barrakee, who had been out in a different direction with H., not long after I had been here, came up, and H. went on down the stream, while Barrakee and myself watched over the pool. A little gazelle came to drink: instead of my waiting in order to get a broadside shot, I fired at it while it was looking at me, and the result was to break one of its fore-legs. Barrakee rushed after it, but we saw no more of it. I then mounted my mule, which had been grazing close by, and rode home into camp. Our three days were over, our provisions finished, and we resolved the next day, which was Sunday, to start for home.

Feb. 14.—I was worse to-day, and we started early for our camp on the Tackazzee. The servants, while we had been absent, had, according to arrangement, moved the camp away from the river; Fisk had been left in charge. The reason of this move was they were all very much frightened of the Baria, and thought, as we should be absent with our guns, that it would be better if they got away from the river, by whose banks the Baria are supposed to be

always lurking. I rode towards camp feeling very desponding, and on the way H. fired at some pig, and wounded one badly, but the beast managed to get away, leaving large tracks of blood on its path. We also saw some strange-looking deer, of a colour resembling that usual with donkeys, but with short horns curving back from their foreheads like those of goats: they stood, I should think, very nearly fourteen hands from the ground. On our way back we passed the spot which had been the scene of our unlucky exploit with the lion, and, curiously enough, two gazelles came bounding past at the time, but we succeeded in missing them; we were fated to kill no game in this place. When I rode into camp, Hadji Mahomet, the old native we had brought from Massowah, came up to welcome us back, and said, in Arabic, "Allah has brought you safely back." I felt very much inclined to reply, and I believe I did at the time, "No, my mule has brought me back," as I felt very disappointed, and looked upon the expedition we had made as a total failure. I was very glad to get into a comfortable bed, as the coolie, who had lost his way, had succeeded in finding the camp the servants had pitched a little way off from the Tackazzee.

Feb. 15.—I was still bad with this horrid complaint, and so I stayed in camp reading the few books we had with us, and took medicine; I also amused

myself by making a small model of the raft that I proposed to use when hunting the hippopotami, in order that Brou might understand how to go on working at it. H. and Fisk went out shooting partridges to make broth for me. There were not nearly so many partridges here on the Tackazzee as we found on the Mareb ; for the tamarisk bushes which fringe the banks of the Mareb were, as a rule, full of them. With a couple of dogs we might really have had some very good shooting, and made big bags ; but without dogs it was almost impossible to get the birds up, as they ran so tremendously ; but when they did get up they were not hard to shoot, as they did not seem to fly nearly so strongly as the English birds, which they very much resembled, with one exception, which was that their bills and legs were red, the plumage being exactly the same. We tried to keep some of the birds, in order to give them that gamy flavour which is esteemed in England ; but the weather was too hot, and the flesh got bad too quickly. The rapid setting-in of decomposition was a great drawback when a beast was killed in camp, as the meat had to be eaten almost immediately ; but, both in its raw and cooked state, it is surprising what a quantity the natives will manage to consume.

Feb. 16.—To-day I was very much better, the medicine seemed to have done me good ; but, instead

of staying in camp and perfecting my cure, I stupidly went out and did a hard day's work, standing up to my middle under water in a hot sun, to complete the raft. The raft when finished was, to speak fairly, a great success. It was made in the following way : Six logs of the dome-palm tree were lashed with raw hide, cut from the skin of one of the cows which we had killed in camp ; the logs were lashed to two cross pieces, and from one cross piece to the other I fixed two thin pliable boughs, under which I jammed a lot of dry "hippopotamus grass" (the long grass growing by the side of the river), which had been cut a day or two before and put out in the sun on the shingly bank of the river to dry. The grass was jammed in under these thin sticks, so that it went across the logs and made a place for any one to stand in, and also assisted in promoting the buoyancy of the raft.

A caravan of about three or four hundred people came across the river to-day on their way to Walkait. These caravans generally assemble in Tigré, in order to make up a large number, so that their goods may be properly cared for in case of any attack by the Baria. One man among them had a couple of very good-looking donkeys ; he must have procured them from some of the Arab tribes who live on the borders of the country ; I tried

to buy one of the donkeys, but the man wanted a great deal too much for it. The caravan only stayed close to our camp during the heat of the day, and in the afternoon they moved on. They were bringing back grain and salt, having taken out cotton to the different towns in the province of Tigré.

Feb. 17.—I am better to-day, and I worked at the raft to put the finishing touches to it. In the afternoon I went out fishing, and I had put on a hook with a piece of raw meat as bait, having made a rod of two bamboo sticks spliced together. I caught nothing, nor did I even get a bite. I was sitting in camp towards the evening when one of the coolies rushed in to say that he had seen some elephants on the other side of the river, a little way down, looking very much as if they were going to cross the river. Barrakee was in camp. I took my guns, and he, with two of his men and my gun-bearers, went out to look for the elephants. We crept along the bank of the river, and on the other side Barrakee pointed out two fine bull elephants; they were standing amongst the dense jungle which bordered the river, evidently undecided whether to cross or not. H. and Fisk were out shooting partridges for our dinner, and just as we saw the elephants we heard two shots. This was very unlucky, but H. had no idea that there were elephants near. It must have startled them, as very shortly afterwards we saw

them crashing away through the forest. It was a very pretty picture to see these huge animals standing amongst the thick trees and jungle, the rays of the setting sun, at the time, just lighting up the broad and sparkling river as it ran below us—the whole being a thoroughly wild African scene, and one which any lover of sport would have appreciated. I should say that whilst fishing that afternoon I left a hand-line in charge of a native, who afterwards assured me, when I asked him if he had had a bite, that some big fish had taken hold of it and pulled him on to his knees; certainly one of his knees was a little bit bruised by the stones. The thermometer here ranged from 109° to 115° in the tent, in the middle of the day; so my readers may imagine it was pretty hot.

Feb. 18.—To-day Brou got the raft ready for launching, and a large caravan of nearly four hundred people came across the river, most of whom camped close by. One of our messengers, whom we had employed to carry letters for us to the coast, had taken this opportunity of joining the caravan in order to bring the letters down to us. Arrekel Bey, the Governor of Massowah, had sent me some French newspapers, so we were well posted up in all the news. The chief of the caravan had been very kind to our coolie, who was named Givra Michael, and had given him food during the journey. We sent for

the chief and talked some time with him : he told me he was taking his people, and cows, and belongings, back to his home in Walkait, the country then being at peace. There are very often feuds and disputes going on among the petty chiefs, especially in this part of Abyssinia. I amused the Abyssinian by showing him my guns and revolvers, and, for his edification, fired at a mark with one of my revolvers : he was much astonished at the rapidity with which the revolver went off. I made him a present of a pocket-handkerchief and two hanks of beads, with which he was very much delighted. I had with me at the time Rassam's book, called 'British Mission to Abyssinia;' in the frontispiece of the first volume is a picture of King Theodore, and this I showed to the chief and most of his followers. They were intensely interested with it, and said the likeness was very good. It was very amusing to hear their remarks and to see the expression on their faces as the picture was handed round. I went out fishing in the evening, but some monster of the deep ran out about seventy yards of my line so fast that I could scarcely hold it. I am rather better to-day, having taken some opium.

Feb. 19.—Brou came to me this morning to tell me that Barrakee was suffering from diarrhœa, and begged I would give him a little brandy and water. I

also discovered that others of the servants were suffering from the same complaint; indeed none of them looked very well. I consulted with H., and it was agreed that we should move camp to-night, there being a full moon at the time, which afforded plenty of light to travel by. I launched the raft in the afternoon, and got it safely over the rapids that we had forded, and moored it on the left bank of the river, a little above the hippopotamus pool. I thought at the time that perhaps a change up into the more bracing air of the hills would do myself, as well as the rest of the party, some good, and that we might before leaving the country return here; but my wishes were never realized. That evening we dined early and left camp about eight o'clock, having burned all our "dasses" (or leaf-houses), which made a tremendous blaze, and the scene certainly was a wild one. Before coming down to the Tackazzee I had presented all the servants with a piece of red cloth, which they put round their heads, and by the light of the blazing sticks they looked more like so many devils than human beings. They were scantily clothed, and the red handkerchiefs gave them a fierce and wild appearance. We crossed the river, bathed in the light of a full tropical moon, then marched up along the road that we had come by, and we pitched camp near some water in the jungle at 10.45. I was a little

better, but the ride up from the river tired me a good deal.

Feb. 20.—My complaint is about the same, but I do not suffer so much pain from it. I took three doses of opium, but this medicine makes one feel very weak. I amused myself in the afternoon learning an Abyssinian game called Galanift, which is played in the following way : twelve small holes are dug in the ground, six in a row opposite each other ; four pellets, or bullets, are put into each hole ; A takes one row, and B the other. They sit down opposite each other, and the object of the game is to take the adversary's bullets by certain moves, which are all made from left to right. It is something like the game called Solitaire, but is very complicated, and requires the exertion of your powers of mental arithmetic to understand it.

CHAPTER X.

OUR DAILY ROUTINE—BAKING A JERKED KOODOO—LOSS OF AN ELEPHANT—A SEPARATION—MY ILLNESS INCREASES—STARVATION—A GOD-SEND—SAD PLIGHT—FRESH SUPPLIES—A HARD MARCH—NARROW ESCAPE—AN EXCITING HUNT—PRIMITIVE BUTCHERY—A CURIOUS SHOT—CARAVAN—EXCHANGE OF CIVILITIES—“CHURCH”—CHANGE OF AIR—ACCIDENT TO THE KITCHEN—STRANGE VISITORS—A THUNDERSTORM.

Feb. 21.—I have nothing of great importance to tell about this day. I lost my pencil, that I used to write my diary with, and I was obliged to use as a substitute the sad remains of the only quill pen left me, and which I managed to render serviceable by tying it on to a bit of stick. As I have so little to say, I will give you a sketch of our day in camp. It begins mostly at sunrise. The first thing that happens is that the donkeys and mules are untethered and led out to grass. Our water-barrel is taken down to the stream or pool which we are camped by, to be filled ; it takes about three men to carry it up again full. When the water is brought up the kettles are put on to boil, and

Mahomet, who is my servant, and Fisk, H.'s servant, get ready our things for dressing. We get up and generally perform our ablutions in the open air, with our little basin either propped upon the stump of a tree or else on a heap of stones close to the tent. We breakfast about eight, and then go out shooting—that is to say, I used to do so when I was well. Fisk serves out the servants' rations for the day about ten o'clock, and a very few minutes after this all hands are hard at work making their bread, which is accomplished by mixing flour and water and making the whole mass into a plaster-of-Paris-like paste.

Most of our servants have divided themselves into messes of three or four, and the way in which they bake their bread is both original and primitive. Well-to-do travellers in Abyssinia generally carry an iron pan, exactly the shape of one of the copper scale pans that grocers weigh tea in, but the poorer natives have to content themselves with a flat stone, numbers of which are to be seen, propped up on other stones, at all the camping-places on the road, with the ashes of recent fires beneath them. While they are making their paste the stone is being heated over a fire, and directly it is hot enough they pour on to it the liquid dough and let it bake; when it is done on one side they turn it over like a

pancake. When sufficiently cooked it is a hot doughy sort of flat cake ; and those people who are lucky enough to have a little red pepper eat it with the bread. There is nothing of which an Abyssinian is so fond as red pepper, and the quantity he manages to pass down his throat is something surprising. We had a good deal of rice with us, and had found that by grinding the rice between two smooth flat stones, which we got from the bed of the Tackazzee, it made excellent flour ; and we had hot rice cakes, baked in Brou's iron pan, every morning for breakfast. After breakfast, if I did not go out shooting, there was generally something to do in camp, either to mend or put the men to work at making ropes, out of the fibre of a certain tree, for lashing our things together, or else sending them to cut grass for our "das," or leaf-house, which we live in during the day, as these bowers are always much cooler when they are well thatched with grass. Sometimes we have tiffin, and sometimes not. It is usually hottest between one and three in the afternoon, and then it is always best to be in camp. In the evening we generally went out shooting till dark. The donkeys and mules, having been taken to water, are brought in about five o'clock and tethered ; they are left to stand till dark, when the grass that has been cut is given them for the night. We dined between seven and eight,

and after dinner the flour was served out to the servants for their evening meal. Any arrangements were now made for the day following. H. and I sat by the camp fire, generally played a tune upon my banjo, and then, after enjoying a smoke, we turned in to rest.

After dinner is one of the pleasantest times in this beautiful climate ; the stars shine brightly, and from the place where we were now encamped the constellations, both of the Great Bear and the Southern Cross, could be seen. For the last week I had been so unwell that I had not written up my journal. Symptoms of dysentery had appeared, and I was afraid I should be laid up. During this week H. had been out shooting, and he and Barrakee had the luck between them to kill a large koodoo. Of course all hands in camp were delighted, and a great portion of the meat was "jerked," that is to say, hung up in the sun and dried. We found, at first, this jerked meat was very hard to eat, but by grinding it between two stones, mixing it with a little rice, fat, and onions, and then making it into a sort of rissole and frying it, it did not make at all a bad meal.

One day during this week H. went out after elephants, and saw a very large herd ; he said there must have been about eighty of them, but when the

herd winded the hunters, they trumpeted and separated about the country. Two of them were making down a little ravine, close to where H., Barrakee, and the gun-bearer, were standing. H. told me that Plowden Gubrihote, his gun-bearer, was in a dreadful "funk," and assured him that these elephants were the man-killing elephants, well known in this part of the world; that they would surely kill them if they did not immediately take to their heels and run away. H. told him to sit still, or else he would "lick" him. The elephants came nearer and nearer, and one of Barrakee's men put up his gun to fire. This would have been ridiculous, as they were nearly eighty yards off. H. knocked the gun out of his hand, and told him to sit quiet. The elephants were now fast approaching, when Barrakee and his man both fired. This was exceedingly annoying, as from all accounts the elephants would have passed by close to where the party were concealed, and H. would have had a capital shot.

We stopped in the jungle here rather more than a week. I thought perhaps another change of air would do me good, and we moved up to Kourasa, where we had been camped before. I did not know at the time that I was so ill, nor did H., or else I should not have made the proposal I did when we got here. I told H. that our time was short in the country, and

it was of very little use his stopping with me ; I thought he had better move on with Barrakee, who assured us that, in the country near his village on the frontier, we should find very good shooting, even much better than we had had before. H. left me a few servants behind, and four or five donkeys. We were getting short of flour, and we agreed that he should go on to Barrakee's village, send me back flour for the servants, and that I, on the day after he left, would move up to Coom-Coom-Dema and stop there till the flour arrived. Accordingly the next day he started away in the morning. Just as he left, luckily I said to him, "I think you had better leave me five dollars of our money, in case of accidents." This was literally all the coin I had with me when I started to go to the coast.

I started the next day for Coom-Coom-Dema, and very nearly lost my way ; my gun-bearers did not seem to remember it, and it was only by chance that I recollected some trees and a low hill which guided me across the plain to where we had been encamped before. When I arrived I felt very bad indeed, and I was really exceedingly ill. The flour had run out, and I had to serve out some rice that evening to my servants ; for myself I had some biscuits to eat. I hoped by the morning of the next day to receive flour from H., but it never came, and the servants had no food nearly all that day, except some scraps that

they had managed to save. The next morning I had nothing to give them, but they seemed to bear it all without complaint. I went out to try and kill some of the little sand-grouse for myself, but I did not succeed. When I came into camp Petros informed me the donkey-boy had broken down; and when he had brought in the animals to tie them up for the night, that he had begun to cry and had said, "Where's master? for I want something to eat." I was at my wit's-end what to do, as it was two long days' march to the nearest village, which was Azho, and I had only just enough rice for one meal.

Things looked very bad; the evening closed in, and, just before it got dark, Petros shouted out, "Oh, here is the flour!" It was not our own flour, it was a leading party of a caravan which was going through to Walkait. This was indeed a God-send! I saw there was no time to be lost, so I called for my rifle, and the first donkey I saw that looked as if it was loaded with flour I seized, led to the camp, unloaded it, and poured out the flour on the tarpaulin sheet which generally formed the floor of our tent. The owner of the donkey, as well as some of the rest of the caravan, were, I believe, going to expostulate; but I told one of my servants to tell them if they moved I would shoot them, and that we were starving and we must

have food. At that moment the chief of the caravan—or rather the man who is generally appointed to lead these people through the country, and arrange all payments to the customs—appeared. He made everything all right, and we kept the flour ; and, as he rode away to the place where they were going to stop that night, he sent me back, by one of my servants, some bread of his own.

Feb. 26.—I find in my journal this day that I was very ill, and went out in the morning and shot two brace of little sand-grouse, as I had not had fresh meat for some little time. I did not take any more medicine, as I found it made me so weak. I caused the servants to make me a large “das,” long and narrow ; in one end I used to sit most of the day, and in the other my guns and what few provisions I had were hung up. They watered the ground all round, and also the grass walls of the “das,” so that it made me pretty cool during the heat of the day, whilst the darkness kept the flies out : certainly it was rather miserable work feeling and being ill all alone in the jungle ; indeed long before this I ought to have started for home, as, when once dysentery gets hold of you, nothing but complete change of air, good food, and medicine, is likely to effect a cure. I still hung on to the thought that I should get better, but, if I had known what was really the matter, I should never have hesitated.

Feb. 27.—Our own flour did not appear till the afternoon of to-day, and I never felt more pleased than when I got it. They gave me a note from H., which was written in pencil on an envelope, and ran as follows:—

“Barrakee’s Village, *Friday, 26/h, 1 P.M.*

“Thank Heaven we have just this moment arrived! You never saw such a journey: it was sixty, if not seventy, miles. We waited for two hours in the heat of the day to rest the donkeys, and then went on as hard as we could, and arrived at the river that Barrakee had spoken about at 6 P.M. The rest of the donkeys came up about an hour after. We stayed till the moon got up about 11 or 12 P.M. We had to leave the donkeys behind; they will, I hope, be here some time to-night. I have been marching ever since, and have just this moment arrived. The mules are regularly done up: mine and Fisk’s cannot move. I shall keep the things *here* till you *come up*. You will find it two good days’ march from Coom-Coom-Dema to this place. The river B. spoke about is a beastly place; the water is bad, but you will be able to catch fish. We caught some. Three of Barrakee’s villagers are to take the flour. I brought one of ours on, intending to send him back, but it is impossible, for he is dead beat and has been walking for twenty-four hours straight off; he could never walk back sixty miles, for I quite

think it is that from Coom-Coom-Dema. You will see when you come. They will show you the way here. How is your complaint, old man? I do trust it is all right now. I cannot move from here, for I know when the baggage comes up the donkeys will be completely done. They are bound to come on account of the food.

“ *Friday, Feb. 26, 1.30 P.M.*

“ They have just finished grinding and collecting the flour. Our coolie is going after all. He is anxious to make a dollar. If they are not with you before sunset to-morrow (Saturday), they forfeit a dollar. The money is with their Shum.* There is enough for one hundred and sixty bread” (rations), “also ten eggs. One of the bags that the flour is in does not belong to us. We shall soon be all straight. Barrakee is getting the rest of the flour.”

Never was letter more acceptable, and especially as with it had come the long-desired and looked-for flour. Although H. had not long been away from me, in the short time I had experienced a feeling of loneliness as well as utter helplessness; but it was no good giving way to thoughts like these, as if my servants once saw any inclination on my part to despond, I should never have been able to get anything done, and they would have found out too soon that even

* *Shum* is Amharic for a chief of several villages.

the much-dreaded white man is at times dependent upon help, even if it be from a nigger. On the whole, I cannot complain of my servants, as they had much to put up with. When one is ill, little annoyances are hard to bear, and I dare say at times I was thought rather tyrannical; but it is very little use regretting these things now, as there is not the remotest chance of any of my natives reading what I have here written.

Feb. 28.—This was an uneventful day, and I felt exceedingly weak and ill. It had become very much cooler than it was in the two camps nearer the Tackazzee, as the north wind blows towards the evening and the mornings are quite cool.

March 1.—I find written in my journal: "Am, I think, getting really better. I have shot one and a half brace of little sand-grouse as they flew near the tent in the morning. I went after the herd of hartebeest that I had seen very often near the tent, on the plain at the head of which I was encamped, but I could not get near them. I succeeded to-day in very nearly poisoning myself by mistaking one medicine for another, for I took opium in mistake for some other stuff. After I had discovered my error I swallowed some brandy, went out for a walk, and told my servants if they found me going to sleep to wake me up."

March 2.—The opium seems to have done me good,

as I find written in the journal that "I am decidedly better, the symptoms of dysentery having partly gone away." To-day I had great fun shooting a fine bull hartebeest. This animal is about the size of an Alderney cow. I was going out of my tent very early in the morning when I saw the herd grazing not far off on the plain. I tried to stalk a bull which was feeding behind the herd and on the nearest side to me, but I failed. I then tried to stalk another, which was more on the left of the herd, and which looked a very big gentleman, and, I think, an old friend of mine, as I had fired at him before. As I was creeping along, the herd had closed up and passed not far off on my right. The bull that I had first tried to stalk was following. I missed him with both barrels of my Express, and then I ran to the top of an ant-hill and took aim at him with my heavy 12-bore rifle. It was a very long shot; the left barrel broke his hind-leg just at the hock; and now the hunt began.

I had come out of my tent with only my slippers on, and in walking through the burnt grass of the plain the short hard stubs were rather trying to my feet with nothing but stockings on. The bull hartebeest managed to go very nearly two miles; he stopped on several occasions and let me come close up to him. I fired at him with my Express, and, as I thought, missed him; he then limped away again, but went

a good deal faster than one would suppose was possible. It was getting very hot, but I was determined the brute should not beat me. I lost sight of him for a little time among some trees ; when I got through them I found he was trying to ascend a small hill. I had two more cartridges of my heavy rifle, and these I fired at him, and as he was waddling up the hill the shot broke the fetlock-joint of his other hind-leg. This stopped him, and Goubasee and myself found him sitting up like a dog, close to a white-ant hill. I had no knife with me and no cartridges, and I did not know on earth what to do ; so Goubasee got big stones and handed them up the ant-hill to me, as I stood on the top and tried to smash his head in by throwing them at him. He charged at me in a clumsy way twice, when I was not on the ant-hill, and very nearly caught me with his horns as I half tripped-up in stepping back. I thought I would look in the cartridge-bag to see if I had completely run out of ammunition : to my great joy I found one Express cartridge ; so I put the beast out of his misery with a shot behind the ear.

Guyndem, my other gunbearer, soon came up with knives. The carcase was soon skinned and cut up, and I sent back for two donkeys to carry the flesh into camp ; it made two heavy loads for the donkeys, and the head and skin taxed the strength of the don-

key-driver as he carried it home. I found that the animal had been hit by three bullets ; one of these was a very curious shot : when I had fired at him with the Express, and thought it was a miss, the bullet had entered and exactly divided the hartebeest's tail as he was galloping straight away from me. This shot must have entered his entrails and stopped him considerably ; the two other bullets were the shots that broke the hock of one of his hind-legs and the fetlock-joint of the other. There was great rejoicing amongst the servants and donkey-drivers, who had abundance to eat ; and three long strings of jerked meat might be seen festooning the trees near camp. They dried the meat on the leather thongs with which the baggage was tied on the donkeys ; these thongs were stretched from tree to tree.

I returned to camp completely done up ; and I do not think the chase after the deer, under the hot sun, did me very much good ; but still a little sport, when you have been ill for some time, cheers you very much. I had been trying to make little snares to catch small birds with, and especially the doves, that came down in great quantities to drink at the water-pools. It was rather amusing to watch them on these occasions, but they were far too wary to be caught by such clumsy contrivances.

March 3.—Went out this morning to look for some

gazelles, of which there are generally two or three in a little patch of very high grass that escaped the fire at the time the rest of the dry grass was burnt. I saw a buck gazelle and fired both barrels of the Express, and missed. I then went and stood on an ant-hill in the middle of the patch of high grass ; two does got up close under my feet and rushed away. I fired both barrels, and missed. The gazelle is by no means an easy thing to hit with a rifle when it is going fast, as it is very small. I was rather disgusted with this bad shooting, and was walking back to camp when up rose another buck. I fired one barrel, and missed ; this shot seemed to turn him, and he went away parallel to the direction I was going in, offering a shoulder shot. I rolled him over with my left barrel as he was cantering along ; he gave two or three convulsive bounds, and, when I got up to him, he was quite dead ; there is nothing like an Express bullet for deadliness. Goubasee made a bag of the skin, and I kept the head.

When I got back to camp I found that H. had sent me some more provisions, and I also got a letter from him, written on an envelope :—

Barrakee's Village, *Sunday, February 28th.*

“ The coolies have just come back. I am very glad you got the flour from the caravan—that was first-rate ; but I am sorry you are not coming on yet. As

for this village, it is a horrid place, and there is nothing to shoot within miles of it. It is up on a hill, but is on the way to the Mareb ; and so to-morrow I am going to start with Fisk, Barrakee, Brou, and three or four coolies. I shall leave some behind for you, and they will bring you on ; Barrakee is going to leave a man to show you the way. I hope I shall have better luck than on the Tackazzee. As for flour, I cannot send you as much as I would, but still send a good lot. We have hardly any empty bags. We sent you three the other day ; but when you get here have them filled up, and come down. I send a bundle of letters down, addressed to the consul at Suez—will you see that one coolie, if not two, takes them down to Massowah, to catch the steamer on the 24th of March, as it only takes nine days at the outside to get from Coom-Coom-Dema to Massowah. Do send them for me to Arrekel Bey, and ask him to post them. I send them to you, as I know you will have some letters to send too. I have no ink or paper left. This is the last—and I am writing to you now with gunpowder and milk, which does capitally. I am fearfully sorry about you, and should come back if I thought I could do any good ; but I know I really could not. But I trust, old fellow, you will be all right by the time you receive this. I shall not send the flour off from here till daylight on Tuesday morn-

ing, or if I can I will arrange for it to leave on Monday (to-morrow) evening. They are working hard now, grinding a dollar's worth for us to take ; and I am sending you some honey, one bottle of brandy, potatoes, onions, and some eggs. One donkey takes the flour and two of our coolies.

Monday morning, March 1st.

"Your flour will leave this afternoon. Cassa here, in charge of the baggage left behind. Shall be back to-day fortnight ; but they will show you the way down when they come.

"Ever yours,

"H."

I must explain to my readers that the Mareb which H. talks of in this letter is the same river that we were on before, he being many miles lower down its course, in fact, much nearer the plains than where we had been.

A large caravan with cotton from Walkait came by to-day. The chief of the caravan came up to me as I was seated outside my "das" loading some cartridges, and paid his respects, commencing by making two very low bows—nearly touching the ground with his head. I gave him some powder which he begged for, and asked him if he would give me a *machet*, which is a Tigré word for a little sickle, which the natives use to

cut grass for their beasts; and my servants were always complaining that they had not one, and so they could not manage to cut grass well for the donkeys. He was exceedingly civil and good-natured, and took one of my coolies on with him some little way on the road, to the place where they were going to camp, and sent him back with the machet. The chief told me they had seen elephants as they had come up from the Tackazzee, and also three or four of the Baria tribe. His people, very bravely—as they were ten to one—offered to fight the Baria; but these niggers were wise in their generation, and took to their heels on seeing so large a party. The tail of the caravan did not come up till nearly dark, and so camped for the night about 150 yards from my tent. Just after sunset, when I was going to eat my dinner, they began a low-toned chant in which they all joined; it was rather pretty and mournful. I asked Hadji Mahomet, who was a Mahomedan, what it meant; he said it was “church;” at least that was the interpretation that Petros, my bearer, put upon his answer. All these men who were singing were Abyssinian Copts. I was much better in health this day.

March 4.—Instead of staying quietly at Coom-Coom-Dema I thought that a change of air to the other side of the plain would do me good. I had seen a spring of water on my way here, and so in the

morning I sent out one of my servants to look for it. He came back and said he had found it ; and so, in the evening, just before sunset, I started for my new camp. The servants were very annoying and they would do nothing they were told. I fired much of the dry grass of the plain, in hopes of burning the rest of it bare in order that I might see more game, and I had a long shot at a "tora," or hartebeest, on my way across. When we got rather near the water where I was to camp we happened to lose our way, and we were wandering about for some time. Ali the cook possessed a mule, on which the tin-pots and kettle were strapped ; the animal got frightened at the rattling of the things on its back, and galloped away kicking and plunging, sending the utensils flying in different directions, including my two plates and a large boiling-pot that I used to make soup in, and also Ali's bedding ; this, I am sure, he regretted a good deal more than any of my things. He had bought this wretched mule for 12 dollars at Adiaboo. This trip across made me very ill, as all my arrangements went wrong, and I did not get comfortably to bed until rather late.

Before I left Coom-Coom-Dema three wild-looking men came into camp : they said they had come down into the jungle to look for wild honey. They had a small gourd filled with this stuff, for which they wanted a dollar, and they were evidently very poor. They

gave me as a present two large pear-shaped fruit with a green velvety shell ; the inside was filled with seeds, covered with a sort of white spongy pulp, which was deliciously acid. The servants called this fruit Habbaboo. I find Mansfield Parkyns says that this fruit is called Dema, the scientific name being *Adansonia digitata*. I gave these honey-hunters two hanks of beads, with which they seemed very well pleased.

March 5.—I was not nearly so well this morning, having drunk some brandy and water the night before. The rice-water which I had been drinking during my illness had been made at Coom-Coom-Dema before I started, but it was in one of the tin-pots that galloped off on the back of Ali's mule. The servants again put me up a capital "das," and it was very dark and cool. The cook's mule was found to-day, but minus the stock-pot and some plates. I informed him I would shoot the brute if he did not go out and find the plates, etc., and wonderful to relate, they appeared in the evening all right, but rather battered. The mule had gone back to Coom-Coom-Dema, and was found close to where we had before camped, cropping the grass by the side of the water. I went out in the evening and shot one of the little sand-grouse for dinner as it came down to drink. I felt very poorly, and almost too weak to walk about.

March 6.—Worse to-day. This horrid complaint sticks to me, symptoms of dysentery having returned. I am afraid I must make up my mind to start for home—a bad ending to a sporting expedition. I shall have been ill now three weeks to-morrow. I took some chlorodyne last night, and I think it only made me worse.

March 7.—I am much better this morning, having taken three doses of opium, which acted instantaneously, thank goodness! There was a thunder-storm last night with two very heavy showers, and the most beautiful sunset I ever saw; great masses of clouds coming up from the south-east, and vivid lightning, and the thunder rolling and echoing through the mountains; it was a very grand sight. I was kept awake part of last night by the howling of a hyena, about ten yards from the tent. I thought at first it was a lion, but the servants assured me it was a *gib*, which is their word for hyena. He stopped about a quarter of an hour, making a hideous noise, and at last retired. There was a new moon to-day, so I was in hopes there might be a change in the weather, which would have done me much good: it was a great deal cooler this morning, after the thunder-storm. I made Goubasee administer a slight castigation to Ali, the cook, who had neglected to boil my rice-water the night before, and, as it was the

only thing I had to drink, this was very disagreeable, as it was brought to me for my breakfast almost boiling hot and excessively nasty. It is needless to say this mistake never occurred again. This was not his first offence, and Ali, who was a Cairo man, was rather inclined at times to be sulky, and not to do anything; but on the whole he was not a bad servant.

CHAPTER XI.

AN INGENIOUS BED—EN ROUTE FOR THE COAST—A SAD FLIGHT—
UNPLEASANT TRAVELLING—FRIENDS—FORCIBLE PERSUASION—AN
AMUSING ENCOUNTER—AN ADVENTURE—I OPEN A BAZAAR—PRICES
—HOSPITALITY—HAGGLING—REINFORCEMENT—LETTERS FROM
HOME—A MISERABLE NIGHT—FALSE RUMOURS—I SELL TWO
DONKEYS—“HARD UP”—GEESE AND HORNBILLS—ILL-TIMED
THEFT—STRANGE QUARTERS—TOOTH-BRUSHES.

March 8.—I was very bad all last night; I think I had eaten too much meat at dinner. I am writing my journal with a pen made out of a guinea-fowl quill, and with ink composed of some gunpowder, preserved milk and water, mixed up together—rather a curious combination. My little camp bed is so small that I asked Mahomet, my bearer, if he could make me any sort of bed rather bigger. He said, “I make bed Abyssinian fashion?” and I replied “Yes.” He set to work, with the help of Goubasee and Guyndem, to make an *inchat algar*, which is their word for a wooden bed. They cut four short forked poles and stuck them upright in the ground; the holes they put them into were grubbed out with the iron tent pegs.

They then tied sticks on to the four posts, so as to make a sort of hollow oblong. These sticks were tied with plaited bark or fibre. Inside, these oblong sticks were lashed both to the foot and head of the bed. Of course such a bed can be made of any height and any length. They then cut a quantity of dry grass and laid it across the frame, and my rugs spread over the dry grass made an excellent, comfortable, springy couch. I should think such beds would be very good for impromptu hospitals on a campaign, using hay or straw instead of grass; they are exceedingly warm and well ventilated. It took about two hours and a half for four servants to do the whole thing; that is, for cutting the wood and grass, grubbing the holes, tying the sticks, and completing it.

I have determined to start for home, as I get no better here. I am indeed an unlucky sportsman, and I always was. Perhaps it is all for the best. I do not know what H. will say to this. I went out for a little walk on the plain yesterday, and saw the herd of hartebeest in the distance, but I did not feel up to stalking them.

March 9.—I am a little better to-day, and the provisions I sent for to Barrakee's village have arrived all safe; so I start for Azho, a large frontier village, to-day. I hope to catch the steamer which I believe leaves Massowah for Suez about the 24th of March. To-day

I shot a large bare-necked vulture, which was hovering over the camp last evening, and I am writing my journal with one of its quills, as Petros, in sweeping out my "das," chanced to lose my guinea-fowl pen. The vulture I thought to be a bird of ill-omen, and so knocked him down. In the evening I went out close to the water and shot one of the sand-grouse which came to drink, but it was so dark I could not find the bird. No one can have any idea how miserable it is to be sick in the bush, away from everybody and everything—no one to speak to but your servant, who generally talks the vilest of negro English. However, I was homeward-bound to-day, my servants having made me a rough sort of palanquin, in which I intended to be carried, as I meant to try and avoid either walking or riding. I hoped to get fresh eggs, milk, and chickens at the village of Azho, which might improve me; as in reality it was good food that I wanted. I had sent on some of my baggage with Guyndem and another servant, and with orders to build me a "das" at Azho, and let the people know that I was coming. I proposed to stop half-way on the road at Maidarou.

March 10.—I had an awful journey on the previous night. I started from the other side of the plain of Coom-Coom-Dema at five o'clock by my little sundial, and got to Maidarou, our old camping-place, about 9 P.M. Of course I could not say if this time was

correct ; it struck me as being a good deal later. Taiou, one of our coolies—a man who had been with an Englishman named Flood that had lived in the country some time before—lost the donkey on which my bed was strapped, just before we came into camp. It was very dark when we came to Maidarou, and Goubasee, who was carrying my palanquin, and who was in front, tumbled into a hole and shot me and my gun and books on to the ground. This was rather unpleasant, considering the state of health I was in, but there was no alternative but to get up and laugh and go on. At last I saw the twinkling light of a fire, and I soon found myself at the top of the little rocky hill where we had camped before. But although I had arrived at the halting-place there was no bed for me to sleep on ; so I bade them put all the skin bags I had with me down at the end of the tent, then I put some big stones alongside, and covered the whole with some dry cut grass. This made a capital bed, and I slept better than I had done for the last two weeks, as I was completely tired and done up. Curiously enough, the caravan that afforded me some flour when my servants were almost starving had just arrived, on their way back to Adiaboo with cotton from Walkait. Zaroo, the man who behaved so kindly to me before and gave me some bread of his own, said, as I was so ill, he would induce some of the people of

the caravan to carry me in my palanquin. I here wrote my journal lying on my bags and straw under the shade of two beautiful trees, a luxury one appreciates in this hot climate. I am much better, I think, to-day.

That afternoon I started for Azho ; the chief of the caravan, by threats and persuasions, making his people carry me. I was jolted along somehow or other ; and the journey was not eventful, with one exception. One old gentleman declined the honour of carrying me, and made a great row. I found myself and my palanquin placed on the ground, with every prospect of being left there. I said, if they would not take me on to the next camping-place I would shoot them, and I let off my revolver in the air, but still the old native refused to take up the burden, and told the other people not to carry me. I here leaped up and knocked him backwards with "one in the eye ;" he tripped up over his load of cotton, that he had placed down beside him, and turned a complete summersault. The rest, seeing what had become of him, and being rather astonished at a sick man getting well enough to do this, picked up me and my palanquin and carried me off. It was getting late, and the men carrying me were going very slow, so I rode the mule belonging to Ali the cook, for a little way, but found I should not be able to get to Azho that night, and I stopped at

some water half-way. I was better, so I told the chief I would not bother him or his people to carry me any farther; and he came the last thing in the evening to say good-bye to me, as they were going to start at daybreak.

Last night Ali and Mahomet had a difference of opinion about an order I had given with regard to some food. One of them had told a lie, and they both accused each other of lying. I said I could not allow this, as nothing would be done if things went on in this sort of way; so, in the morning, after the caravan had gone on, I said they were to settle their dispute with two sticks. I made Goubasee cut two long sticks, and the scene which ensued beat anything I ever saw. They were so frightened of each other that neither of them dared at first to hit very hard, but at length, when either of them did so, the other flinched most dreadfully and then returned the blow with compound interest. When one blow was harder than another a yell in proportion followed its infliction. I made myself quite ill with laughing at them, and the servants were in convulsions too. At last they begged of me to let them off; and so I said they ought to be satisfied with each other now.

March 11.—Started for Azho in the afternoon, riding Ali's mule, and, after a tiring march, I came in sight of the village at sunset. Some of the villagers, who

had heard I was coming up, came out to meet me and say "How do you do?" I found that Guyndem, whom I had sent on, had not built a "das," as the people would not lend him any tools for making it, or give him any assistance. I went straight up to a cluster of houses, and said I should pitch my tent inside the hedge which surrounded them. The people were very civil at first, and brought some milk. I asked them to give me some dry grass, which they used for thatching their houses, to put on an *angareb* which they had lent me.* I was in great pain at the time, and was very much annoyed at their not bringing this grass, so I sprang up with my revolver in my hand. Before going any farther I must tell the reader that the adventure which followed nearly cost me my life, and it was all owing to my own foolishness. It is a great mistake to flash your weapons if you really do not mean to use them. I ran down among some houses where my servants were talking trying to persuade the people to give me some dried grass, and said if they did not give me some I would shoot them. It was getting rather dark, and I fired my revolver off in the air. The women screamed, and in a minute the whole village was up in arms. Some of the men

* *Angareb* is an Arabic word for an oblong framework raised on legs; a network of raw hide is stretched on the frame, and the whole forms the sort of bed that is used nearly all over the East.

had spears, and the others guns : they completely surrounded me, and one seized me by the wrist and tried to drag me off. I snatched myself out of his grasp and backed against a straw hut. Another man kept pointing at me with a loaded gun about a foot off my head, calling me *shifter*—which means robber. At this moment a very tall Abyssinian pushed his way through the crowd and came up to me, putting his hand over his mouth, which was to give me to understand that I was to hold my tongue and not make a noise. He took me by the hand and led me away, the crowd hooting and shouting at me. One fellow ran in front and aimed his spear at me, but the tall Abyssinian, who seemed to be my friend, raised his spear, and the fellow took to his heels. As is very often the case with most of these disputes, it all ended in smoke. I got the straw for my bed after all, and went to sleep. They came to me and told me I must take my tent outside their village, but I replied that I would not move it, and that it did no harm there ; so it stopped there for the night.

March 12.—To-day I made Petros sit outside the door of the big round Abyssinian hut that I had taken possession of during the heat of the day and “make bazaar,” as he calls it ; that is to say, he took my handkerchiefs and beads and red cloth which I had with me, and exchanged them for chickens and eggs,

of which I was in great need. It may interest some of my readers to know what the rate of exchange was : one Manchester cotton pocket-handkerchief for one chicken and six eggs. The haggling and bargaining over these important mercantile transactions was very amusing, but Petros seemed up to everything ; in fact, his usual occupation was that of a merchant in the bazaar at Suez. In the afternoon the man who had pointed the gun at me and called me a robber came to pay me a visit. I asked why he had called me a robber. He said that when he heard the shot fired, the people told him I had shot his brother. He had brought me half a large pumpkin as a sort of peace-offering. I said to him, if he would bring me a whole one I would give him a red pocket-handkerchief. He went away and fetched a large pumpkin, and I gave him a red handkerchief, and then told him I was not accustomed to be called a robber, and that, although I was very sick, if he would get two thick sticks I would go outside the village with him and give him an excellent thrashing. My friend sneaked off at this, and another Abyssinian, who was standing by, seemed much amused. I had not got rid of the horrid complaint that troubled me, and I was afraid that dysentery had set in in earnest. I sent back a coolie from here to H., with a letter to say that I had really started for the coast. I heard no more of him till I got to

England ; the account of the sport he had I give hereafter.

Towards the evening I started for Adikai, a village we had camped in before. The man who had accused me of shooting his brother and called me a robber came to say good-bye to me, and we parted the best of friends. I tried to find out who the tall Abyssinian was who had helped me out of the scrape and had taken me by the hand and led me through the crowd, but he had disappeared, and no one knew who or where he was ; I believe he was a king's soldier who was stationed here to collect the customs. I had an easy march to Adikai, and when I got to the village my servants told me that Zaroo, my old friend the chief of the caravan, who had made his people carry my palanquin, lived close by. Shortly afterwards he came to see me, and brought me some Dargousa beer, which had been kept for some time and which was pretty good. I was kept awake half the night by the barking of the village curs : at last, at my entreaties, some ballagas turned out and tried to stop them, but it was of no use. A crying baby in a hut close by also enlivened the night by its yells ; so I sent to the mother of the child and told her to give it some milk, which seemed to quiet it.

March 13.—The people of this village were much

more civil to me, and one of two men who had behaved very well at Azho, and who had come up with me, sent off to a village close by and got me twelve eggs. The Abyssinians, curiously enough, do not care for eggs; they sometimes make a sort of curry of them with red pepper. After this man brought me the eggs, which was early in the morning, he went on to Adiaboo, where it was market-day. Zaroo came to me this morning, and I talked with him over my journey to the coast, as he knew the road very well. He told me he was acquainted with a much nearer way to Koudoofellassie than that I had come by, and I asked him if he would come with me to show it: at first he said he would, and then he asked me what I would give him. I only had five dollars with me, so it was of very little use offering him that. I said I would give him a revolver; but he told me this would be of no use to him. What he really wanted was one of my muzzle-loading pistols, of which I had a pair of very good ones, which I had bought of Rigby in St. James's Street, and which I particularly did not want to part with. After haggling with him a long time I was quite disappointed, as he had at first assured me he did not want anything for showing me the way. I then told him I would trust to myself and go back the same way I had come, and thanked him for his former kindness.

I sent on the donkeys with the tent to Maihumloo, a little river where we had camped before, at the end of the Sememmar Plain, meaning to go on in the afternoon. I tried at this village to get two men to carry some of my things, but they asked a great deal too much, and so we could not come to terms. On my way to Adiaboo, Goubasee stopped an old man, and his wife and daughter, and asked the old gentleman if he would help to carry the load Goubasee had with him. The old patriarch asked where we were going to ; Goubasee replied Sememmar, and that he would get a dollar if he carried the load ; upon which, without a moment's hesitation, notwithstanding the entreaties of his wife and daughter, he picked up the load and carried it along. His daughter then began to cry, and said she would not leave him, so they both joined our little party. This was a great piece of luck for me, as it relieved Goubasee of a large part of his load.

The market was just over as I passed through Adiaboo. I tried to find some man to guide me the short way of which Zaroo had told me, but none of them would go, as they said it was a bad road, the stages were long, and there was very little water. While I was talking to these people a young man came up and said that he had letters for Rass Mayo, which was the name I went by in

Abyssinia ; upon which my servants told him he was to give them to me immediately. This was the man that the head of the Mahomedan village had sent off with my letters. He had sent them by the steamer and had brought me back letters from home. I was delighted to get them, and for the rest of my march across the large plain which lies between Adiaboo and Sememmar I occupied myself in reading the good news from home. I had miscalculated the distance from Adiaboo to Maihumloo ; it was a great deal too far, and we had started late, having been delayed in the market-place. I was getting more and more exhausted, and it was rapidly becoming dark. Just as night closed in a thunder-storm came on, Goubasee, who had been our guide, completely lost his way, and I was dreadfully ill and weary, so we had to stop in the middle of the jungle. I managed with great difficulty to light a fire, and make a little soup out of Liebig's extract of meat. The poor girl that had accompanied her father, who was carrying some of my baggage, had sprained her ankle, or sustained a similar injury, and it was a miserable sight to see her sitting shivering over the fire and crying piteously with pain. I also suffered very much from illness all night.

March 14.—At last morning came, and I determined to move on to Maihumloo the first thing, in hopes

of finding the donkeys with the tent and some food. Some travellers came by, whom my servants rushed at and despoiled of some of the bread they had with them; thus at any rate my retinue ate some breakfast. I stopped at some houses, which were only a very short way from the place where we had lain out for the night, but during and after the thunder-storm it had been so dark that we could not see around us. The inhabitants of these huts gave me some eggs, which provided material for my breakfast. When I got to Maihumloo there was no sign of either tent or donkeys, which had gone on before us, so I stayed in the dry bed of a watercourse that was very pleasantly shaded over. I succeeded in making a fire and cooking my eggs for breakfast, and sent Goubasee off to look for the donkeys. He seemed to think that they had gone on in front of us to the village of Sememmar, so he went up there to look for them, and returned without having found them; but shortly afterwards they all appeared. Hadji Mahomet, who had charge of them, had taken good care not to sleep out in the jungle like ourselves, but had halted in a village not far off and stayed there for the night. I sent them on, in the afternoon, to Sememmar, and from thence they were to go on to Zadawalka.

After the heat of the day, and when I had rested myself by lying in the shade, I started after the

tent and donkeys. I called at the house of the chicker of the village of Sememmar, told him who I was, and said that I wanted some chickens and eggs ; he was very civil, and gave them to me at once without any palaver. I asked him if he knew of any news in the country, and I was told that they had heard that Mimleck, the king of Shoa, with whom the king of Abyssinia was at war, had fought and beaten Johannes, the king : I heard afterwards there was no truth in this. Again I travelled on, and, after having passed the place where the market of Sememmar is held, I came upon Hadji Mahomet and the donkeys, with the tent pitched and everything ready. He told me it would be impossible to go on to Zada-walka that day, so I resolved to stop here, as everything was comfortable and there was plenty to eat. Our encampment was just below a pretty little Abyssinian church, which was surrounded by large Qualqual trees. Most of the churches here are built in little groves of these queer-shaped trees.

March 15.—I went to bed shortly after I got into camp last night, and this morning I found myself better, yet still very ill. I think I must have lost at least a stone in weight, having become dreadfully thin. It was very pleasant to wake up and find oneself in a comfortable little camp-bed, instead of being chilled and cold lying by the half-consumed sticks of a small

camp fire, my experience of the previous day. Two donkeys were completely worn out, so the servants recommended me to sell them here for what I could get. Some of the villagers standing near were informed that I had donkeys for sale ; we had a short bargain over the matter, and at last the two went for four dollars. My fortune, that was to last me until I got to Massowah, where 100% was awaiting me, now consisted of seven dollars, and, as my readers will see later, I experienced great inconvenience in consequence of not having more money with me.

In the afternoon, having first started the remaining donkeys in front, I went up to the village of Zada-walka. It was a long march, but very pleasant and cool, the day being cloudy, and the country we were travelling through furnished a succession of beautiful scenes. There was a heavy thunder-shower in the middle of the day, which soaked us through. On the way I had a shot with my Express at a jackal which crossed the path, but I could not succeed in hitting so small an animal with a bullet. Just after the rain had ceased, we crossed a small stream ; Goubasee, who was in front of me, suddenly stopped, and I saw swimming slowly up the little river two fine geese. I jumped off my mule, got my 16-bore gun, fired, and killed the gander. A cartridge which had some time previously stuck in one of the barrels of my

gun obliged me to load again, and after my first shot the goose only flew a short way up the river and dropped, when I bagged her too. These were two lucky shots, as they provided me with fresh meat, of which I stood in great need. Not long before I arrived at the village of Zadawalka I saw five enormous hornbills feeding in a field close to the path. They are called in Abyssinia Aba Gouma. They were an unusual sight stalking about in different directions, and picking up what insects and beetles they could find.

When I got to Zadawalka I rode up at once to the Shum's house. I went in and introduced myself, and said I wanted bread and lodging for our party that night. By way of putting ourselves on a pleasant footing with our new hosts, my followers, who I am sorry to say had now become rather a rough set, seeing a jar of beer standing close by, immediately seized it, handed it round, and the thirsty souls swallowed the beverage almost before the rightful owner had time to look about. The people of the house assured me I could not stop there that night, but said they would provide me with a house a little way off. I made them swear by the king's death, Johannees Mut, which is the form of oath in Abyssinia, that they would do what they promised. The donkeys and tent did not appear, so I

had to sleep in an Abyssinian hut, where I could see the moon shining through the roof, and insects and creeping things paid me unwelcome visits. The door of this hut was so low that entrance had to be effected on the hands and knees. Notwithstanding all these little inconveniences, I managed to sleep pretty well, after a good dinner made of the two geese's livers, which were both large and excellent, and brought to mind *pâté de foie gras*—without truffles.

March 16.—This morning I was not troubled with the very violent pain which I usually experienced, and altogether I felt in better condition. I asked the chief of the village if he could give me two coolies to guide our party as far as Gundet, as I proposed adopting a new and shorter route, which would save a day's march. He at length found two men, who for two dollars each were to go with me; one dollar each I had to pay before they started, and the balance was to be given them on arrival. The villagers brought up plenty of fresh eggs for breakfast—they were the only things which really seemed to agree with me. A great crowd of Abyssinians watched me as I got up in the morning and performed my toilet: what seemed to excite their attention most was the operation of washing my teeth with a tooth-brush and some charcoal. They could not make out what I could possibly be doing, as their mode of cleaning

their teeth is by chewing a stick and rubbing their grinders with the frayed end. About eleven o'clock I started for Adavartee. This village is only one day's march from Adowa ; in fact, from Adavartee you can see the peculiarly-shaped conical-pointed hill which marks the neighbourhood of the Abyssinian capital. Before reaching Adavartee I stopped at a house on the road which was tenanted by very civil people, who brought my servants beer to drink. Petros cooked some eggs and bacon for my lunch, after which we rested a little while and then went on. We were unable to reach Adavartec at all, but were obliged to stop at a village called Adoqual. The donkeys, with the tent, came up just before it was dark, and, instead of my having to sleep in the village, I moved to the tent outside, and slept comfortably there. The geese were roasted for dinner, and proved capital food.

CHAPTER XII.

SELF-HELP—SCARCITY OF PROVISIONS—LAID-UP AGAIN—A RÉUNION
—HOSPITALITY—AN OLD FRIEND—AN ALARM—ORDER OF BATTLE
—A FIELD DAY—"KIND ENQUIRIES"—OLIVES AND OIL—PUR-
CHASE OF A CLUB—CATTLE PLAGUE—AN INJUDICIOUS DINNER—
MY ILLNESS INCREASES—I HAVE TO BE CARRIED—LUXURY OF A
WASH—I BUILD A HOUSE—THE SEA—CIVILIZATION AGAIN.

March 17.—I occupied myself this morning in cleaning up my guns and pistols, which had not been looked at for the last three or four days. This was a long, tiring affair, but I recommend all who are similarly circumstanced to look to their fire-arms themselves, unless they have a trustworthy European servant with them, as natives always manage to do everything contrariwise, and spoil the very best weapons. I was now much better in health, but still I suffered from bad diarrhœa. I started for Gundet late in the afternoon; the consequence being that, as it was a long march, we lost our way. Petros and Guyndem, whom I had sent up to some villages to try to get eggs or chickens for my dinner that night, happened to lose us completely, as we

were crossing the valley of the Mareb through a thick jungle. We crossed the dry bed of the river near which, only much lower down, we had previously encamped ; darkness came on as we pushed through the jungle, and we were overtaken by a thunder-storm in the same way we had been before, and we were compelled to halt, as it had become pitch dark. We succeeded in lighting a fire, but I had literally nothing to eat, as Petros was carrying the few provisions of which I was possessed ; the only thing in the shape of food that I had was a bag of corn for my mule. I made Goubasee roast some corn in the camp fire ; this he picked out of the ashes, and it constituted my dinner. These hardships would have been bad enough to bear if I had been well, but in my weak state of health they were very trying. I was terribly ill all night, and very cold, as I had nothing to cover me but a cotton shama which I had bought for a dollar at the village of Zadawalka, and, in the morning, I was scarcely able to move. Another night like this would, I think, have finished me, and my tale would have been unwritten.

March 18.—When daylight dawned my servants went up to some houses, which, although close by, in the darkness we had not been able to see. Petros and Guyndem appeared the first thing this morning, having passed the night in the valley of the Mareb, in the

jungle ; Petros assured me he slept very little, as he was afraid the lions would eat him. The natives, who had heard I was ill, very kindly brought some milk and eggs. We were close to a village called Aila Mareb, and I determined, after about an hour or so, to push on to Gundet, so as to complete the march that I had intended to do the day before. I was so bad I could scarcely sit on my mule, but at length we arrived at Gundet. I lay here under a tree for most of the day, completely exhausted and worn out, and I managed to get a little sleep. During most of the day the tree which I was under was surrounded by great numbers of cattle, which seemed to think I was occupying their favourite resting-place: there was water close by. They were remarkably fine beasts for this part of the world, and I should think at least a thousand head passed by the place where I was lying. A little short Abyssinian came and squatted down close by me ; he seemed inclined to converse, so I sent for Petros, and we held a long conversation on different subjects, which ended by my inducing him to go for some preparation which is called Shirou, and is made from a bean pounded up with red pepper. The Abyssinians eat this as a sort of relish with their bread or meat. I do not suppose it was the best thing I could have eaten, but still I had a fancy for it, as in illness one often has for some questionable dainty.

While I was lying under the tree a rather nicely-dressed Abyssinian came up, followed by a couple of loaded mules and two servants. Petros rushed up to him and embraced him. I asked who he was, and Petros replied, "It is my brother, whom I have not seen for many years." I believe, in reality, it was his step-brother. He was a merchant, who had come from the Shoa country, and was going down to Massowah with musk and gold.

Since writing the above there has taken place in this very spot, Gundet, a very severe battle between the Egyptians and Abyssinians, and I cannot help thinking that it was owing to the nature and conformation of the ground that the forces of Egypt, 2000 in number, were so completely overwhelmed and destroyed by their enemies. Before reaching Gundet, that is to say, on the road from Massowah, the country is all flat table-land, when suddenly the ground drops, and Gundet lies in a narrow valley, with high cliffs on each side of it. An army marching right down into this defile would easily be surrounded, and its retreat cut off. Probably the Abyssinians let the Egyptians descend the steep hill, and then encountered them, when the only thing remaining for the invaders to do was to fight it out to the last. But it seems incredible to me that a force of 2000 should march right into the jaws of an enemy

without seemingly having the least intimation of their being near. The Abyssinians are stated to have mustered 30,000 strong, and I am sure my old friend Kirkham would have taken every advantage of the locality and the ground. The hatred of the Abyssinians to the Turk, as they call the Egyptians, was in this case very well exemplified, as nearly every one of the latter was killed, and among them Arrekel Bey, whose loss, as a kind friend, I very much deplore and lament, for nobody could have been more civil and courteous than he was when we were at Massowah.

I cannot help here quoting a letter of mine, dated May 7th, 1875, published in the 'Pall Mall Gazette' shortly after my arrival in England. At the end of the letter I state what I thought would happen if Egyptians and Abyssinians came in conflict in the country of the latter, and it turns out my prognostication has not been falsified by events :—

“ Having only just returned to England from travelling in Abyssinia, I happened to see a letter copied from the 'Cologne Gazette,' and commented on in your paper of the 13th of April last. The correspondent of the 'Cologne Gazette' must be misinformed, I think, on some of the subjects he writes about. First, the writer designates King Johannes, the king of Abyssinia, 'as but a poor actor by the

side of a real hero,' i.e., comparing him with Theodore, the late king. King Johannes has totally subjugated his country and the rebels that were in it. The people cultivate their land in peace, and tranquillity prevails. As for his subjects being in a state of chronic rebellion, it is not the case; let any one who doubts this travel through the country, and judge for himself. Secondly, the 'Cologne Gazette' says, with regard to Colonel Kirkham, 'that all his attempts to improve the country have failed.' Now, as every one knows, with nothing, nothing can be done. Colonel Kirkham was living with me for a month, and has often told me the first thing to be done in Abyssinia is to make and improve the roads. He has often tried to persuade King Johannes to do this, but the king will not spend a farthing and keeps his money hoarded up. Thirdly, with regard to the missionaries at Gindar, it is so far true that General Kirkham, to whom Gindar has been given by the king, allowed the missionaries to build a house there. I never heard anything of the Abyssinians threatening to kill the missionaries and burn their houses. I passed through Gindar myself on the 25th of March last; the missionaries' house was standing still, but the missionaries had left, one of their number having died of fever after the rains, so they moved to a healthier place. Fourthly, the article now ends by saying that 'a struggle of the

undisciplined and badly-armed Abyssinians with Egyptian troops would be hopeless.' Now, the Egyptians would have to fight through mountain passes and hills—a warfare well suited to Abyssinian tactics, and not one that Egyptian troops would either appreciate or well understand. The Abyssinians are just as well armed as the Afghans were when we fought against them on the frontiers of India. The name of the Turk is hated in Abyssinia, and used as an epithet of opprobrium."

In the afternoon I started on the road to Adgoosmou, and climbed the abruptly steep hill at the top of which, if my readers remember, Borum Braswouldeselassie took leave of us. The tableland on which I found myself is called Serai, and is celebrated for its fertility. I travelled on, and stopped by some water, a little way beyond the village of Adwahla. The servants were rather annoyed at stopping away from the village, as there was not any shelter near, and I had only just erected the tent when a fearful thunder-storm came down on us; luckily, my bed and things were inside, and so everything was all dry, but the wretched servants got wet through and through, and it was with great difficulty that Ali kindied a fire with cattle-dung for fuel, as no sticks or wood could be got anywhere near.

March 19.—This morning Goubasee was laid up with a bad leg, which I thought proceeded from rheumatism combined with hard work. I hoped he would not break down altogether, as he was an excellent servant, and he had been of the greatest use to me. I sent Guyndem, my other gun-bearer, up to the neighbouring village, and some villagers very kindly brought brown bread and milk, for myself and my followers. This was very hospitable of them, as, on most occasions, villagers took no notice of messages brought by one's Abyssinian servants, and it was very often with great difficulty we got provisions even by applying in person. To-day several caravans passed the camp on their way down to the coast. These caravans are just beginning to travel; but it is during the rains that most of them go through the country, so as to arrive at Massowah in June or July, at the time it is hottest on the coast, and when most of the business is transacted.

I started after breakfast for Koudoofellassie, and arrived at nightfall at the door of Borum Bras.'s house; I found himself and household all at dinner. This was a time of fasting with the Abyssinians, when they do not eat during the day, but only after sunset. I had sent on word by a native, who said he was going to Koudoofellassie, to tell Borum Bras. that I was coming, but evidently the man had not delivered the

message, and I was not in the least expected. But it seemed that I was no unwelcome guest, for directly one of the servants saw me he went in and told Borum Bras. I had arrived. I was led in by the hand, and was truly glad to see this Abyssinian chief, as he had been very kind and hospitable to us on our way to the Tackazzee, and I hoped he might help me to get to the coast. After they had finished their dinner, he sent away his household, and had a fire lighted for me inside the hut. I was wet through, cold as well as ill, and was very glad of the warmth. I told Borum Bras. all that happened, how unlucky I had been, and that now I was on my way home on account of illness. He was exceedingly civil and kind, and asked what he could prepare for me for my dinner. Out of beans his wife made me a sort of cake, which was very good, and he also gave me some "tej." My donkeys, with the tent, etc., came up later, but I resolved to sleep in the hut in which I was. I accordingly turned in, but it was of no use trying to get any rest, as the hut in which I reposed was, as a rule, not only used as a dining-room but also as a stable, and the horses munching their food during the night kept me awake. Sundry small animals of the insect tribe seemed to like the taste of the blood of a white man; it might have been a change for them; it certainly was a change for me, and, in my already weak state, unbear-

able ; so, about one o'clock in the morning, I made my servants get up and pitch my tent, and there I went to bed, and slept well the rest of the night.

March 20.—This morning Borum Bras. got me a messenger, and I sent down letters to the French Consul, as well as to the Governor of Massowah, telling the latter that I was ill, very likely to be a day or two late for the steamer, and begging of him to keep the boat waiting for me, if possible. Whilst I was taking my breakfast, and whilst Borum Bras. was talking to me and inquiring after my general health, there was suddenly a shout, the chief started up and rushed off to his house close by. All the people of the town ran to their houses and armed themselves, and the women stood on the tops of the houses screeching their peculiar cry to call out the men. The cause of the commotion was that a robber, who lived near this district, had attacked an outlying village, and had carried off some cows and killed a man. All the inhabitants turned out and formed themselves in battle array in two lines outside the town. The mode in which Abyssinians go to fight is rather a curious one: the men that are lucky enough to possess guns are placed in the front rank in one long line, and behind them are those that have only spears and shields—this line is generally three or four deep. I caused my mule to be saddled, took my gun, and rode out to see if there

was any chance of a fight taking place. It was very amusing to see a little fellow strutting up and down opposite this armed rabble and haranguing them, calling upon them to fight well and to follow Borum Bras. their chief ; telling them, in so many words, they were the bravest of the brave, and there were no heroes in the world like them. Then something like a word of command was given, and the whole of the men moved forward a little, shouting and yelling, then they squatted down again. I asked if there was any chance of seeing this robber, or of his coming here. An old Mahomedan, who seemed wiser than the rest, informed me that there was not the slightest likelihood of his coming to attack Koudoofellassie, as the people were much too numerous. I went back to camp and got my things packed up, as I intended to march to Terramnee that day.

When all was ready I started off, and found that the army of Koudoofellassie had moved some little way outside the town. Borum Bras. and his attendants, on horseback, might be seen in the distance going through a variety of extraordinary evolutions, galloping hither and thither, making a pretence of spearing people. When I came up to the crowd I found the women of the village were going about with large jars of water to quench the thirst of their husbands and relatives, and some of them had brought

out food ; they were evidently going to make a day of it. I took leave of Borum Bras. with much regret ; he rode a little way on the road with me, and then we parted. I arrived at Terramnec shortly before sunset, sent for Tuckloo, a former acquaintance of mine and the chicker of the village, and asked for some eggs for my dinner. He brought me a few rotten eggs, which I had much pleasure in smashing on the stones before him to prove their condition ; he then went back and obtained some fresh ones. I made myself an omelette ; and my donkeys, with the bedding, etc., having come up, I had my tent pitched a little distance outside the village.

March 21.—This morning I received a visit from one of Borum Bras.'s servants, whom he had started off very early to inquire after me and see how I was getting on. This was very kind of him ; and this man also ordered the chicker to give me what eggs, etc., I wanted, and then left the village. After he had gone, this same chicker seemed to think it quite unnecessary to take any notice of me, and I received no provisions ; so, as a flock of goats was passing by my tent, I took the liberty of catching a kid, tender and young, and handed it over to Ali to cook, who soon cut its throat, and kid cutlets were very shortly frying in the pan for my breakfast. I had hardly eaten the last of them when the owner of the

goats came up and made a great noise, saying he must be paid. I told him I had not the slightest intention of paying him anything, as he had been ordered to supply me with food, and a young kid was very little out of a large flock. Eventually the affair was settled, and it was agreed the villagers should bear the loss of the kid between them. The meat was a great change for me, as I had been living mostly on eggs and chickens for the last week. I started about mid-day for Deeveroua. It was very hot crossing the plain which lay between this village and Terramnee. I went past Deeveroua and halted for a short time below it, under the shade of a large tree that grew by the bank of the Mareb, which is here quite a little stream. I tried to get two natives to carry some of my things down to Massowah, but they refused to do so unless they were paid in advance. I assured them I had plenty money at Massowah, but they would not believe me, and I had not enough coin with me to pay them.

I do not think I was ever so much annoyed in my life as I was on this occasion with these two men. I felt inclined to give them both a thrashing; but it is very lucky I restrained my temper as, otherwise, it is very likely I should have had the whole village down upon me, and perhaps would not have got so well out of it as I did out of my last scrape. One certainly

does feel very helpless without money, no matter where one finds oneself, and this fact, combined with my prostrate condition (of which, no doubt, these men knew as well as I did), rendered me incapable of much exertion. So I had to make up my mind to get my already rather weary servants to carry the things; and the proverb, "Money makes the mare to go," came bitterly home to me.

After resting myself, I rode towards the village of Chickut, which was, my readers will remember, the scene of my night march on our way to the Tackazzee. The country through which I passed presented a beautiful appearance—one continual grove of wild olive-trees, and great Qualquals dotted here and there. This part was not at all cultivated, yet I should think that these olives, if properly trained and cared-for, would make a valuable property; but the natives of Abyssinia have no idea of making oil from the berries. This place is only four days from the coast, and transport of the oil, when made, would not be very expensive. I was very ill all the day, and in the afternoon was so bad that I had to get off my mule and rest under a tree. When I arrived at Chickut I pitched my tent close to a little Coptic church. The village is built on a high hill, and the houses are not like those in the other part of Abyssinia through which I had been travelling; they were flat-roofed, and the walls

were built with stones, whereas the ordinary form of huts was a round wall with an extinguisher-shaped roof. It was very cold here, and directly the tent was pitched and my bed made ready I turned into it, and caused my dinner to be brought to me as I lay between the blankets. I find this entry in my journal : "I am not worse, but still very ill. Thank God, I am getting near the end of this awful journey! The chicker here was very kind, and gave my servants abundance of bread for themselves and a chicken for me."

March 22 : Chickut.—The people here are all busy putting a roof on the little Coptic church, close by which I had encamped, and the work is done amidst much chattering and talking. I heard from some merchants yesterday that Arrekel Bey, the Governor, had come back to Massowah ; so I hope, if this is true, he will keep the steamer for me if I am late. I sent on some of my servants to Beatmohar, K.'s house, to-day, to let his boy Waldemariam know that I was coming, so as to make everything ready for me. Hadji Mahomet was behind with the rest of my donkeys, and I was afraid they would not arrive at Massowah in time to catch the steamer. I started in the afternoon and climbed the steep hill which lies between Chickut and the table-land of Asmarra. It was a lovely view as we ascended, and looked

even more charming in the daytime than it had looked in the light of a tropical moon, the condition under which we last saw it. I passed by Sellaadarou, the place where we had encamped, and saw the remaining marks of the two large bonfires we had made. After leaving this place I met some natives on the road; one of them was carrying in his hand a club made of the wild olive wood: it was a beautifully-shaped weapon, and I induced him, after great persuasion, to sell it to me for a dollar. He would not hear of parting with it at first, but some of his companions told him he was a great fool not to sell it, as he could get many others, and a dollar was a good price for the stick.

Travelling on, I found myself on the large plain of Asmarra. Notwithstanding the precautions the people had taken the cattle disease had got among their beasts, and I saw several lying down, stretched out, dying by the side of the pools. The wind blew cold as I crossed the plain, and I wrapped the cotton shama that I had tightly round me. We were a small and wretched-looking party, as we wound our way slowly across this bare tableland; the hardships and long journeys had told pretty severely upon all of us. I thought the plain would never cease, and K.'s little house, with the extinguisher-shaped roof, rose up in the distance,

but seemed to get farther from me. To my astonishment, among some stunted bushes I saw two gazelles grazing. I alighted and successfully stalked one, but missed him as he bounded away. I was too weak and ill for shooting, so I mounted my mule again and soon found myself under the welcome shelter of K.'s little house. Waldemariam had got everything ready for me, and some fresh baked bread, which was a great luxury. We had left a box of provisions behind here, which I immediately broke into, and to my great joy I found two bottles of claret and other provisions which we had brought up here. I made my dinner of fresh bread, fried sardines, and a bottle of claret—just about the very worst diet I could have taken under the circumstances; the consequence being that I was terribly ill all night.

March 23.—About four in the morning I heard a cry outside in the village, and then a wailing and lamentation, mixed up with donkeys braying and cocks crowing. It transpired that an old man, who had been ill for some time, had just died. This was an unpleasant thing to happen, and was not calculated to raise my spirits under the circumstances in which I was placed. Later in the morning a brother of Naib Abdul Kerim came to see me. The Naib was the man who brought us up here, and who

arranged for the transport of our luggage on bullocks and mules. His brother asked me if he could be of any use, as he had heard I was ill; it was very kind of him, and he proved of great service. I told him that I should be very much obliged if he could get me men from the village to carry me down to the coast, for I was now becoming so extremely weak that I really thought another two days' riding would have polished me off. Accordingly he went into the village and obtained twelve or fourteen men. I borrowed a large angareb from one of the villagers, and caused them to fix two long poles to it, so that it could be carried on men's shoulders. I had no money with me, but luckily K. had left behind a sum of money, and I took the liberty of borrowing some dollars from him to pay the coolies, as these people always insist upon half the agreed sum being paid in advance. I sent forward letters to the French Consul and the Governor, again asking them, in case I should be late, to keep the steamer waiting for me.

On Saturday, about four o'clock in the morning, I was carried very comfortably down to Maihenzee, our old camping-place, where we had passed such a wet night on our way up here; I now passed a comfortable night and felt better. Naib Abdul Kerim's brother brought some coffee with him, of which he gave me a portion, which I think improved me.

The manner of making coffee is rather peculiar, and merits description. When on the march, and travelling in Abyssinia, the natives carry a bag of unroasted berries ; taking a few of the grains out of the bag, they put them on a little mat, and then scrape some hot wood-ashes out of the fire ; these they mix with the coffee-grains, and then shaking the mat up and down, much in the same way as one sees a groom shaking a sieve of oats to get the dust from them, the coffee becomes gradually roasted. I believe that they know when it is sufficiently done by the smell. Then the coffee is put between two stones and ground to powder ; or, if they happen to have a small pestle and mortar, that is used. The ground coffee is then put into a little earthenware vase—one can hardly call it a jar as it has a long neck—water is poured into the vessel, which is put to boil on the fire. When sufficiently heated, some fibre is crammed in the mouth of it to prevent the coffee-grounds from coming out into the cup ; then some of those little Turkish cups are produced, and the coffee poured out and drunk. Drinking coffee in these regions is quite a little ceremony, and is generally the time when the most important affairs are discussed, and compliments are exchanged. I may as well say that some of the best coffee I have ever tasted was made in the way described. Why is it so

hard to get good coffee in England? One great secret, I am sure, is that every time it is made the berries ought to be fresh roasted and fresh ground.

March 24.—This morning I enjoyed the luxury of a really good wash in hot water, in my little tin basin, having found some soap in K.'s house. I had been without soap for several days, and I was disgusted to find that specimens of the entomology which infests Abyssinians and their houses had transferred their attentions to myself. I hope that none of my readers will ever have to experience, especially in a hot country, the total inability of washing oneself properly.

If there is one thing that is pleasant, and I may say almost a luxury, it is the power of having a really good wash. When one is leading a rough life, one misses the morning tub of civilized life. Even on reaching the Tackazzee, the waters of the river looked inviting for a swim; an indulgence in this pastime would be made in the face of the fact of there being a chance, and indeed a very good one, of being snapped up by a crocodile, which would have been an unpleasant and abrupt termination to a trip undertaken from motives of pleasure and sport. The only place where bathing was practicable was the shallow ford, and during most of the day our native servants might have been seen paddling and splashing about in the shallow water, much to their delight and amusement.

I am sure it did them all a great deal of good, Abyssinians, as a rule, not being fond of water applied externally. The not very delicious odour experienced on going amongst them is a sufficient guarantee of this statement.

Whilst I was sitting outside my tent an Armenian merchant, who, my servants told me, went by the name of Bogos, passed by with several mule loads of ivory; he had come from the Shoa country, and he was one of the best-looking men whom I had ever seen; very fair, at least in comparison with Abyssinians, and dressed in the costume of the country. He informed me that the steamer was expected to-day, which was its proper day; and I hoped to arrive in time for it, as, if I could stand the journey, I should be at Massowah to-morrow. I had found an old copy of Milton in K.'s house, and so I passed the morning in reading 'Comus,' which I enjoyed very much.

I left Mailhenzee about mid-day. It was very curious to observe the change in the vegetation at the top of the pass; the coast rains had ceased on the side nearest Massowah, and everything on that side was green and beautiful, whilst in the part I had just traversed the ground was completely dried up, and bushes and trees were bare. I stopped at Mehdet and procured something to eat, then I travelled

on and got to Gindar about 8 P.M., feeling very tired and ill, although the men had carried me well. I sent for Aristides, the Greek, who was still here building a house. He was very glad to see me, and he told me in broken French that I looked very ill, and that he would accompany me next day into Massowah. K., to whom Gindar belongs, had presented me with some land—the whole side of a mountain, and a small hill in the valley; and I engaged Aristides to build me a small house, so if I should go to Abyssinia again I shall have a place to live in. In exchange for this land which K. gave me, I promised to send him out a box-full of the seeds of all our English vegetables.

March 25: Gindar.—This little valley is looking very beautiful, all the vegetation green and sprouting, and the grass up to one's knees; the whole air is alive with bees and insects in quest of honey from the flowers.

How changed was everything since the last time I was here! In my former visits I was full of hopeful expectation, looking forward to pleasant adventures and good sport; and now I was returning completely knocked down by illness, and counting the hours which would elapse before my arrival at the coast. The scene was even brighter and more glorious than when I had left it; but, alas! I scarcely possessed

the power to appreciate it, and certainly I could not enjoy it. Aristides breakfasted with me this morning, and I killed a sheep and presented him with the meat. He promised me that, after I had left the country, he would look after things at Gindar. I proposed that he should take the eggs from the guinea-fowl, which abound here, and put them under hens, so as to bring them up tame; as, if they were fattened and kept in a civilised state, they would be excellent eating. I should also like to try the experiment of introducing rabbits, which I am sure would do very well, yet perhaps too well, so as to eat up every green thing.

I started in the afternoon for Massowah, having arranged that I should be carried to a place called Maital, on a different road from that which we had come by, but the usual one for merchants. I reached Maital about dark, halted for an hour, obtained something to eat, and slept for awhile; then I lay on my angareb, and I was carried off again all through the night. I thought the darkness would never come to an end, and, towards morning, quite exhausted, notwithstanding the jolting of the angareb, I fell asleep, and woke up just at dawn: we were close to the village of Moncullu. The cocks were crowing, and some of the people might be seen moving about. When we arrived here my coolies

actually began running along with me, and singing and laughing. These men had been marching for more than fourteen hours, and during that time had eaten scarcely anything at all! As I approached Massowah I saw in the distance a steamer lying in the harbour; this was indeed a great joy to me, as now I should speedily get home. I was carried into Massowah more dead than alive. I went first to the Divan, and found that Arrekel Bey was away, but the acting governor knew I was coming, and put me into some rooms over the telegraph office. M. de Sarzec, the French Consul, came to see me, after I had eaten some breakfast; he was very civil and kind, but he said it was very lucky I had arrived at the time that I did as the steamer was a day late, and, in the absence of the Governor, the man who was acting for him would not have dared to keep the boat waiting. I dined in the evening with the French Company, a mercantile house of which M. de Lanfrey is the manager. They keep all kinds of stores, such as beads, cotton cloth, silk, sugar, etc., which are sold to the Abyssinian merchants, who take them up the country. The dinner was very pleasant, and it was agreeable to have the opportunity of talking to white men again, after having led the life of a savage for some little time.

Before finishing the account of my journey up the

Red Sea, I must beg my readers to go back into Abyssinia with me, and try to follow the sort of sport my friend H. had been having, and did have, since we parted. He wrote me a letter, saying that directly he had received my note from Azho, dated the 12th of March, and found that I was so ill, he came straight up from the Mareb, and started off with Fisk and Brou for Adiaboo. He arrived there on the 15th, hoping to meet me; but they told him—which he was very sorry to hear—that I was two days in front of him, and also making long marches in order to reach Massowah in time for the steamer. He saw it was useless going on, and so returned that same evening to Adaajerra, which was better known to us by the name of Barrakee's village. On his way back he met with a most unpleasant adventure. It may be remembered by my readers that, on our former visit, Zardic, the old chief of Adiaboo, was excessively rude to us, and we believed it was owing to him that our donkeys were stolen, and also that so large a price was charged for the ones that we bought. H. was travelling quietly along with Fisk and three servants, when suddenly he heard a yelling and shouting, and three or four hundred Abyssinians, with Zardic at their head, rushed down upon them, pulled them off their mules, and began beating them with sticks and spears, and poking their guns into their ribs. This

was far from pleasant, and, after it was all over, H. and his party were more dead than alive. I am afraid that I was unjustly the cause of this little *contretemps*, as Zardic swore that I had knocked down a man at Azho, and then shot at him, and, as they could not catch me, because I passed so quickly through Adiaboo, they thought they would assail H., as they considered he was just as bad. A few days after the assault by Zardic and his men, H. wrote to Rass Baria, the chief of Tigré, a letter of complaint, and, later on, wrote to the King himself about it. He subsequently heard there was a tremendous "row" about all this, and that Zardic was going to be chained, and the governorship of the province taken away from him. I think the punishment very just, and well merited by this chief.

During H.'s first excursion to the Mareb he shot 4 buffaloes, 1 leopard, 1 wadembie (which is a much larger kind of deer than either hagazin or hartebeest), also 1 very large turtle, and 2 crocodiles. This was certainly very good sport, and how I afterwards regretted I was not able to be with him to swell the bag! This was before he came up to try and join me at Adiaboo; when he left Adiaboo, he went to the Cassoua and Sherraro plains. There he shot 8 tora (hartebeest), 3 of them being very large and fine animals, 1 hagazin, and 2 pigs. Also, he says in his

letter to me, that he killed "any number" of small game, partridges, &c. These plains, according to his account, swarm with all varieties of antelope, and, in fact, he seems to have seen a great deal more game than we did in any other part of Abyssinia. He stayed there twelve days, and then went back to Barrakee's village for a day and a half to get flour and provisions for himself and servants ; after which he again went down to the Mareb, and stayed there till the 11th of April, and would have remained longer, but the rains had just begun, and he was afraid of fever. Of course his great object was to get a lion, and for six successive nights he sat up watching over an old bullock—a beast that we had brought down to the Tackazee with us, and one of those which was so nearly drowned in crossing over that river. On the sixth night a lion pounced upon the buffalo, and H. shot it as dead as a door-nail. Naturally he was very pleased, as he very truly said that he would not have liked to leave Africa without having shot either a lion or an elephant. There was great rejoicing in camp next morning among his servants, as Abyssinians think a great deal of shooting a lion, although the king of beasts does not stand so high in scale with them as the elephant. He said Barrakee stayed with him the whole time, and turned out a first-rate guide that knew every inch of the country, and I am sure H. never regretted having

kept him. He gave him Fisk's gun as a present on leaving, which delighted him very much. H. had on one occasion saved his life. Barrakee got knocked down by a wounded buffalo, and the beast was just going to trample him to pieces, when H. came up and shot it dead ; the consequence being that Barrakee was only laid up for a couple of days with a stiff neck, instead of being gored to death. This man was, on the whole, the best specimen of an Abyssinian we had anything to do with while we were in the country. He had been taught a good deal by the missionaries, and he remembered the Powell who, some of my readers may remember, was murdered by the Shangalla tribe some time ago. Altogether Barrakee turned out a most useful and faithful servant to us. In addition to the lion H. shot 8 more buffaloes, 1 wadembie, 12 tora, and some gazelles. On the 11th of April he started for Adowa. Alas ! when he got there he found that no attention had been paid to the orders we had given for shields and black leopard skins. He tried all over the town to get them, but could not procure one. Rass Baria, who lived at Adowa, had left, with most of the population of the town, to join the king, who was fighting a *shifter*, or robber, near Dembellas ; so nothing could be done, and the man to whom we had sent the order said he could not make the shields without the money.

When H. went to try and see him he found that, like all the rest, he had gone with Rass Baria to the king. H. stopped a day at Adowa, and then went straight on to Massowah.

His bag on the whole, that is to say, of large game, was as follows: 1 lion, 12 buffaloes, 20 hartebeest, 2 hagazin, 2 wadembie, 1 leopard, 1 large deer with straight horns, 36 gazelles, 1 very large crocodile, 2 pigs, and an enormous turtle; of course any amount of guinea fowl and partridges. He says, "As for hartebeest and buffalo, at Sherraro and on the Mareb, you can go out and shoot as many as ever you like; upon my word, they are more like cows than anything else. I saved all the best heads and skins, and shall send them home from Suez. I cannot tell you how glad I am that I went down to the Mareb. Day after day I watched for elephant and rhinoceros, but I never even got a shot at one, and as for rhinoceros I never even saw a track of one." This information as regards the rhinoceros is rather curious, and only shows that they must be much farther west, in fact, in the country which was explored by Sir Samuel Baker.

CHAPTER XIII.

FRENCH FRIENDS—ON BOARD—COMPARATIVE COMFORT—A QUEER FISH—A DINNER PARTY—A CARGO OF GAZELLES—ROUGH WEATHER—VOYAGE TO SUEZ—AND ARRIVAL.

March 27: Massowah.—I was very ill all night, and this morning I went to the French Company to get myself some clothes, as what I had on were rather curious garments after the journey. I also bought some stores for the voyage, and two fine elephants' tusks, which were evidently not Abyssinian ivory, as they were much too large. The Abyssinian elephants have very small tusks, and the ivory does not command a very high price. I was afraid my donkeys would not come up till after the steamer had sailed, but M. de Sarzec promised me to have all my things packed up and sent on. I may as well tell my readers that eventually everything arrived safe in England, in as good condition as I left it when last I saw it in Abyssinia. I lunched with the French Consul, who entertained us most liberally and produced some very good "tej," which he makes himself.

I went to the French Company's house in the afternoon; it overlooked the sea, and observing a boat coming up alongside, I hailed it. An Englishman was sitting in the stern, who turned out to be Mr. Cordock, the engineer of the S.S. *Massowah*. I asked him to come into the house and speak to me, told him that I was going away by the steamer to Suez, and that I had been very ill. The boat was to sail the next day, so that evening he dined with me at the French Company's, and we went off to the ship together. He gave up his cabin to me, and he was altogether most kind and considerate.

My only fellow-passenger was an ex-French naval captain, who had been sent out by a mercantile house in Paris to look for guano amongst the islands in the Red Sea. He had been cruising about for ten days in an open native boat, called a sambouk, from island to island, but had not succeeded in finding what he wanted, and was now returning to Paris. He happened to have a servant who was an excellent cook. This man was half a Syrian and half a Frenchman, and on the voyage up to Suez he cooked all our meals for us.

March 28, Sunday.—The ship was to sail to-day, but there was an additional quantity of hides to take in. They were gradually crowding up the deck with this stinking cargo, which had been accu-

mulating at Massowah for some time, the government in Egypt not allowing merchants to ship these hides to Suez, as there was cattle disease at the time in Abyssinia. I sat on the deck most of the day, enjoying the cool and pleasant breeze of the harbour. Just before dinner M. de Sarzec came to see me, and I persuaded him to stay and dine with us; he was very entertaining, and he told us a long story of how he had very nearly been murdered by the natives at Fogera, in the south of Abyssinia. This is the place where Consul Plowden, some time before, had been killed. I wrote letters to K., and gave them to Goubasee to take to Adowa. I likewise left some money behind with the French Consul for H., on his return to Massowah.

March 29.—At daybreak the steamer sailed for Suez. I was better to-day, as an Arab doctor of Massowah had given me some opium and ipecacuanha. This had improved me, as also, probably, the change to sea air had a great deal to do with it. The engineer's cabin was on deck, and so I was as comfortable as I well could be on the dirty little steamer. I had laid in a stock of provisions at Massowah, and had also brought down two small sheep from Asmarra; so with the help of the Syrian cook we promised not to fare badly.

March 30.—I was a little better this morning, and

during the day, but in the evening after dinner I was taken dreadfully ill, in fact, I believed I was at the point of death. The ship anchored for the night, as is generally the custom with these steamers, the day after leaving Massowah, for they are cruising about amongst coral reefs, which are exceedingly dangerous. Whenever we anchored, the sailors all set to work fishing, catching numbers of peculiar-shaped and strange-coloured monsters.

March 31.—I am better to-day, and we all dined on the upper deck as it was very hot below. We had a most unusual fish for dinner; he was like a perch, only perfectly red, and the spiky fin on his back was of a very beautiful scarlet colour. To-day the French captain showed me the charts of his voyages amongst the islands of the Red Sea, which he had made in an Arab boat with a crew of three men and his servant. There is a very heavy dew at night here, but we all three sat talking till late, Cordock, the engineer, produced some rum, which I am sorry to say I am not allowed to drink, but the French captain seemed to enjoy it very much. The second officer of the ship, an Egyptian of the name of Hassain, is a very intelligent man; he has been with ships several times to London, and he talks a little English.

April 1.—We arrived at Souakim about 9 o'clock

in the morning, having anchored, for the night before, inside a reef. I sent for the doctor, Achmet Effendi, who came to see me. He was a very intelligent and clever young man, and he spoke French very well, having been seven years in Paris studying his profession. Ali Effendi, the agent of the steamship company, came off to see me; he is a great friend of A.'s, and seemed a capital good fellow. I gave them all a little dinner in the evening. The table was laid on the forecastle, and was lighted up with about twenty little lamps, which Ali Effendi kindly provided. Our party consisted of Ali Effendi, the company's agent; Achmet Effendi, the young doctor; Mustapha, the captain of the ship; Hassain, the second officer; the French captain; Mr. Cordock, the engineer; and myself. Dinner went off capitally, and our party all seemed to enjoy themselves very much. They drank all the coffee in the ship that was ready ground, and ate a large quantity of sweet things. I sent into the town of Souakim to try and get a minstrel to enliven us, but the musical instrument on which he played was broken, the minstrel was asleep, and the ship's stoker, a Copt, whom I had sent to fetch him, came back quite drunk. After my unsuccessful attempt to entertain the company I went to bed, and I believe the party still went on drinking coffee and smoking cigars *ad libitum*. We

here took on board a number of gazelles and ariels. This is a speculation of an American, named Philipo, who hopes to sell them for large prices in Egypt. The animals are housed in pens on the fore part of the ship and covered over with mats, as what they suffer from most at sea is cold. I am picking up Arabic very fast, and I think, in a short time I should be able to talk like a native. The engineer nurses me and takes the greatest care of me ; in fact, I do not know what I should do without him.

April 2.—We left Souakim at eight o'clock in the morning ; nothing of importance occurred to-day ; we had head winds and a strong sea.

April 3.—It blew rather hard, and the ship swayed about. We dined in the engineer's little cabin amidships, where the motion has not so much effect. Our cook is prostrated with sea-sickness, as well as most of the crew ; in fact, all these Arab sailors are generally sick when it comes on to blow. The engineer, the French captain, and myself were the only people who had not succumbed to this malady.

April 4.—At sea to-day it blew very hard, and we made but little way, it was resolved, therefore, that if it should continue to blow to-morrow we would anchor inside Ras Benas, a large headland on the west side of the Red Sea. Here may be seen the ruins of the old Egyptian town of Berenice.

April 5.—We were at anchor south of Ras Benas, and sheltered by the headland, but the captain would not go near the mainland, as the pilot did not know that the entrance into the small harbour is here. This was a great disappointment to me, as I should much have liked to land and see the ruins of Berenice. The country is inhabited, and further inland gazelles and deer are found ; there is also some vegetation, including mimosa bushes. Cordock and I went out in the evening in the captain's gig to try to catch some fish, but we only got a good tossing among the reefs, yet I think the fresh breeze was beneficial to me.

April 6.—We are still at anchor under Ras Benas, it is blowing so hard. The captain gave us and his officers a breakfast in Egyptian fashion : it was very good, some of the dishes being quite original to me.

April 7.—We weighed anchor at seven o'clock in the morning, it was blowing very hard, and the captain wished to stay here till the wind dropped, but Cordock induced him to go on, as he knew I was ill and wanted to get home as quickly as possible. The Arabs are dreadful cowards in a storm, and when they find themselves in one they generally begin praying, and doing nothing else. I was a little stronger, but still very ill with a bad diarrhœa.

April 8.—We had no chutney to eat with our curry and rice, so I amused myself to-day by making some. It resulted in a complete success, and proved very good. The principal ingredients were some tomatos which the cook had bought for me at Souakim. At two o'clock to-day we were abreast of the Brothers, two low coral islands, and quite chief features of the Red Sea ; the P & O. Company have put a flag-staff on the larger one. A gale was blowing very hard, and Cordock hoped to make Shadwan that night, which is a large island at the mouth of the Gulf of Suez, with a high mountain on it that can be seen for thirty miles. I hope to arrive at Suez on the 10th. It blew so hard, however, that we could not get on at all, so on the morning of the 9th we anchored at Tur, after having passed a very stormy night. When Cordock came to me in the morning, he informed me that the ship had very nearly been lost off the island of Shadwan ; it was blowing tremendously hard at the time, and we were on a lee-shore ; the steering-gear gave way, and the ship went round before the wind. All the Arabs lost their heads, but Cordock, with the help of his assistant-engineer and the Syrian cook, put things right. During all this commotion I was sleeping in utter unconsciousness in my cabin, and in the morning I was very glad they had not woke me up. Tur is a little place on the east side of the Red Sea ; it is

here that pilgrims and travellers disembark, and get their camels to start for Mount Sinai.

I went on shore in the afternoon and bought some provisions at a Greek store there, and by a most unexpected chance found some of Fortnum and Mason's preserved soups at this out-of-the-way place; they had been part of the cargo of a ship that had been wrecked in the Gulf of Suez. The goods had been bought by some Greeks of the Suez Bazaar, then sent down to Tur. I went to see the old Russian gentleman who makes arrangements for all travellers to Mount Sinai. I bought some tortoiseshell from him, and also purchased a pretty good collection of coral and Red Sea shells from a Greek who was hanging about, and who also sold me three beautiful little sponges. Cordock, the French captain, and I walked out to a grove of date-palm trees not far off; the mountains in the distance were covered with a strange purple haze, peculiar to the Red Sea, and afforded a magnificent appearance. These hills reminded me very much of the scenery of the background of some of Gustave Doré's illustrations.

April 10.—We weighed anchor at seven o'clock in the morning; but it was still very rough. The P. & O. ship passed us about five P.M. We had just enough coal to last us thirty hours, and we had to run one hundred and twenty-five miles. Thank God! the

wind dropped, or I cannot guess where we should have been. We heard at Tur that an English ship was on the Zafarina reef. They also told us that it was blowing so hard that ships' boats could not get ashore from the vessels lying in the roads at Suez.

April 11.—At last I have arrived at the end of my journey, but more by good luck than good management. We dropped our anchor at eight o'clock in the Suez roads, having just got four tons of coal left. If these had run out we should have had to go back to Jidda for coal, or else gone ashore in a boat and trudged up to Suez.

Here my Journal ends. And I hope no other unhappy mortal who may go travelling in search of sport will ever have such a journey home as mine has been.

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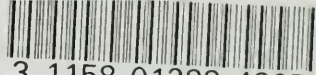
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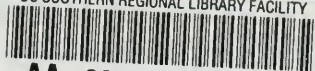
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